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# SHAKESPEARIAN PUNCTUATION

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## PREFACE

THE conclusions stated in this treatise are the result of independent study, but I am familiar with earlier discussions of the subject. Mr. George Wyndham touched upon it very suggestively in his edition of *The Poems of Shakespeare*, 1898; and the rules of punctuation drawn up by Mr. A. E. Thistelton for his series of *Textual Notes* to the plays of *Measure for Measure*, 1901, *Cymbeline*, 1902, and *A Midsummer-night's Dream*, 1903, are a valuable piece of pioneer work. I have consulted this in finally shaping my own results for the press, and I have borrowed a few illustrations.

My hearty thanks are due to Mr. R. W. Chapman for the advice and help which he has given me; the work was undertaken at his suggestion, and in its final form it incorporates his collection of examples. Professor W. Bang has read the proofs and given me some suggestive criticism. Mr. Herbert Collmann, Librarian of Britwell, checked some of the quotations. I have also to thank Sir Walter Raleigh for advice on some doubtful points.

With a few exceptions, which are noted, the quotations of Shakespeare's plays are taken

from the First Folio; the line-numbering of the *Oxford Shakespeare* is added for purposes of reference. The *Sonnets* are quoted from the text of 1609.

Where other authors are quoted, it is generally in order to corroborate the usage of the Shakespeare texts. I could have drawn profusely on these additional sources of illustration, but I preferred to concentrate on the Folio, to the better understanding of which I hope even this slight study will contribute.

P. S.

ST. OLAVE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
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## INTRODUCTION

IT is a common practice at the present day to treat the punctuation of seventeenth-century books as beneath serious notice; editors rarely allude to it, and if they do, they describe it as chaotic and warn the reader that they have been driven to abandon it. It seems to be imagined that the compositor peppered the pages promiscuously with any punctuation-marks that came to hand, and was lavish of commas because his stock of these was large. In other words, old printers—printers as a class—were grossly illiterate and careless; the utmost that could be expected of them was that they should spell out their texts correctly; nobody troubled about punctuation, not even the ‘Corrector’, who is referred to occasionally, for praise or the reverse, by writers of the time.

Doubtless an adroit compiler could get together an assortment of quartos so badly printed as almost to justify a theory so wild as this. But very little reflection should convince a reader of average intelligence that the idea is ludicrous. Has any scholar of standing ever made the attempt to substantiate such a charge by evidence? Is it on *a priori* grounds

likely that printers were more ignorant than the majority of their fellow men? Could a human being endowed with reason serve an apprenticeship, work at the trade of printing all his life, and set up the type of book after book, without fathoming the inscrutable mystery of the comma and the full stop? To come to close quarters with this curious problem: we may concede that a careless or ignorant printer might leave out stops since the omission perhaps saved him trouble; but would he insert them gratuitously for the fun of the thing? Would he print the beautiful lines of Donne in this form—

For love, all love of other fights controules,  
And makes one little roome, an every where.—

as a sheer freak in typography? or is it possible to attach a significance to the commas? (Is not the beauty of the rhythm heightened and the phrasing touched with deeper meaning if the voice rests for a moment after the words with the unusual pointing?)

(The fact is that English punctuation has radically changed in the last three hundred years. Modern punctuation is, or at any rate attempts to be, logical; the earlier system was mainly rhythmical.) Apply this test to a few pages of the First Folio or the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets*, and it gives a clue to many of the

apparent anomalies. Indeed, a lover of poetry, who prefers to read Shakespeare as he was printed and wishes for plain, practical directions in this matter of punctuation, cannot do better than take a work of moderate compass like the *Sonnets*, accessible in facsimile, and collate it with a standard edition of the present day till he has mastered the main points of difference. He will find even in these details a subject of poetic study, for the printer of the 1609 text was at great pains to indicate the rhythm by the punctuation. The *Sonnets* are frequently referred to in the following pages, but one passage of exceptional beauty must be cited as evidence here.

If it be not, then loue doth well denote,  
Loues eye<sup>e</sup> is not so true as all mens: no,  
How can it? O how can loues eye be true,  
That is so vext with watching and with teares?

*Sonnet cxlvi. 7-10.*

Instead of adding any comment of my own, I prefer to summon an independent witness. Mr. George Wyndham has pointed out that in these lines 'there is revealed a piece of punctuation so exquisite as to affirm an author's hand'. He adds, with reference to the colon and pause in the eighth line, 'No journeyman-printer, no pirate-publisher, achieved that effect. It leads up, with the prescience of consummate art, to the rhythmical

stress on the second "can" in line 9, and, in its own way, it is as subtle.'<sup>1</sup>

There is a second important difference between the old and the new systems. Modern punctuation is uniform; the old punctuation was quite the reverse. It was natural that in the earlier stages of printing usage should be less settled, and it was certainly convenient for the printer. For the poet it was something more: a flexible system of punctuation enabled him to express subtle differences of tone. A comparison of the two following passages is suggestive.

Shee is a woman, therefore may be woo'd,  
 Shee is a woman, therefore may be wonne,  
 Shee is *Lauinia* therefore must be lou'd.

*Titus Andronicus*, II. i. 82-4.

*Suf.* She's beautifull; and therefore to be Wooed:  
 She is a Woman; therefore to be Wonne.

*Henry the Sixth*, Part I, v. iii. 78-9.

The justification for either pointing is given below (pp. 18-19 and § § 26, 30); but there is here more than a superficial change. The poet's instinct—for this too was no haphazard variation of the printer—has used even these trivial details to indicate a spiritual difference. Suffolk, who has just captured Margaret of Anjou, falls passionately in love with her at once; he speaks in troubled asides, and he

<sup>1</sup> *The Poems of Shakespeare*, p. 266.

follows this very reflection with the thought that he has a wife already, and that Margaret is too great to be his paramour. In the end he wooes and wins her for the King. The checked and broken speech indicates the conflict in his mind. But in the other passage Demetrius, fired with lust and revenge, has schemed effectively to seize Lavinia, and the confident, unpausing note is in keeping with his character and situation.

It would be easy to multiply instances of variety which admit of intelligible explanation, but with the principle once stated, it will be sufficient to take one or two typical cases. When Moonshine tries to make his first speech in the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe, the words might run simply and directly as they would generally be pronounced,

My felfe the man i'th Moone<sup>o</sup> doth feeme to be.

Or according to the common practice of marking off a phrase or group of words with an enclosing comma (§ 10), the words might be punctuated,

My felfe<sup>o</sup> the man i'th Moone, doth feeme to be. <sub>o</sub>

But the Folio actually prints

My felfe, the man i'th Moone doth feeme to be,  
indicating the speaker's self-importance by an emphatic pause (§ 7).

An extreme case of variety occurs in punc-

tuating an interrupted speech ; the break may be marked by a comma (§ 9), or a semicolon (§ 28), or a colon (§ 32), or the modern dash, or a full stop (§ 36), or no stop at all (§ 41). We call our modern punctuation logical, but we can produce nothing to equal the uncompromising logic of a system which dispensed with stops when, from the nature of the sentence, the stops could not perform their function. The absence of stops is sometimes very suggestive. Pistoll's speech after he has taken his first timid bite of the leek (*Henry the Fifth*, v. i. 49-50), is thus printed in the Folio :

By this Leeke, I will most horribly reuenge I eate  
and eate I sweare.

It is a pity to clog this disordered utterance with the puny restraint of commas. The words come wildly from the victim while he writhes and eats and roars, and Fluellen's cudgel supplies a very satisfactory punctuation for them.

In such passages the modernizers sacrifice something of the life and force of the original, and for this the smoothness of a uniform system is scant compensation. But the text of Shakespeare is disfigured by actual blunders for which the principle of modernizing is not responsible. The opening line of *Sonnet lxxxiv*, as Shakespeare wrote it and Eld printed it, is—

8 . . . . .

Who is it that sayes most, which can say more,  
Then ~~this~~ rich praise, that you alone, are you, . . .  
Here 'which' is a relative pronoun, but it has  
been frequently read as interrogative, and the  
line distorted to

Who is it that sayes most? which can say more . . . ?

An equally bad instance occurs in *Macbeth*,  
I. ii. 55-7, where the Folio reads—

Till that *Bellona's* Bridegroom, lapt in proffe,  
Confronted him with selfe-comparisons,  
Point against Point, rebellious Arme 'gainst Arme, . . .  
Most editors since Theobald have imagined  
that they improved the rhythm of this passage  
by printing

Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm.

By thus deserting the Folio, they have  
obliterated a characteristic feature of Shake-  
speare's style: when he points a double  
antithesis in this way, he avoids monotony  
and attains emphasis by putting an adjective  
with the second pair. For instance,

Turne face to face, and bloody point to point.

• *King Iohn*, II. i. 390.

Then call them to our prefence face to face,

And frowning brow to brow, . . .

*Richard the Second*, I. i. 15-16.

That Face to Face, and Royall Eye to Eye,

You haue congreeted: . . .

• *Henry the Fifth*, v. ii. 30-1.



Teare for teare, and louing kisse for kisse, . . .

*Titus Andronicus*, v. ii. 156.

The evidence here is overwhelming, but it is perfectly clear why editors have gone astray. They have been accustomed to treat the Folio as utterly devoid of value in anything that depends upon the printing. Instead of adopting a critical attitude and asking, 'Can this be kept? has it any meaning? are there parallels?' they merely follow the promptings of their fancy and in nine passages out of ten trifle with the text.

In point of fact, then, the attempt here made to expound and classify the earlier methods of punctuation involves a larger and very important issue. If the current view is right that the First Folio was set up by careless printers, the gravest suspicion is cast upon the text itself. At a time when conjecture ran riot in it, no one could have an inkling of the real nature of the problem. But that day is over, and the scope of textual criticism can now be accurately defined; the poet's words are no longer, we may hope, in danger of reckless alteration. Yet three minor points remain in which—to judge from recent evidence—the Folio is still liable to attack. These are spelling, the arrangement of the verse, and punctuation. Spelling may safely be left to look after itself,

especially in view of the fact that phonetic spellings have been pilloried as misprints. The verse-arrangement is more likely to have confused a printer, especially in dialogue. Apart from a practice of the Folio to break up a blank verse line and print it, where possible, as two half lines—a practice which was certainly intentional at times<sup>1</sup>—there remain a number of passages in which the lines are incorrectly distributed. But the punctuation, which is usually regarded as the weakest point in the printing of the Folio, I believe to be on the whole sound and reasonable. It will help to a higher appreciation of the merits of this famous text if its claim to be regarded as correct in an elementary point of typography can be conclusively established. I have attempted to marshal the evidence, and I venture to submit the issue to the judgement of scholars. Was there, or was there not, a system of punctuation which old printers used? Can the differences of this system be classified, and proved step by step by an accumulation of instances? If so, we must do Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount and their workmen the justice to believe that they knew how to print.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 69, 70.

1. *Light stopping.*

ONE result of a rhythmical as contrasted with a logical system of punctuation is the use of fewer stops. Such sentences as

Haile King, for so thou art. *Macbeth*, v. vii. 83.

... but *Euphues* ... answered, no no *Lucilla*.

Lyly, *Works*, ed. Bond, i. p. 217.

The man that once did fell the Lyons skin  
While the beaft liu'd, was kill'd with hunting him.

*Henry the Fifth*, iv. iii. 93-4.

are obviously pointed on this principle. A natural result is the wider employment of the comma. Sentences which we should now partition off by semicolons or colons or keep quite apart with the barrier of the full stop, were connected by commas if there was a connecting link in the thought. We base our punctuation now on structure and grammatical form; the old system was largely guided by the meaning.

Doe as I bid you, shut dores after you, fast binde, fast finde,

A prouerbe neuer stale in thrifte minde.

*The Merchant of Venice*, II. v. 53-5.

How farre that little candell throwes his beames,  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ibid.*, v. i. 90-1.

*Rob.* The King doth keepe his Reuels here to night,  
Take heed the Queene come not within his fight,  
For *Oberon* is passing fell and wrath,

Because that she, as her attendant, hath  
A lovely boy stolne from an Indian King,  
She neuer had so sweet a changeling,  
And iealous *Oberon* would haue the childe  
Knight of his traine, to trace the Forrests wilde.

*A Midsommer nights Dreame*, II. i. 18-25.

*Ober.* Do you amend it then, it lies in you,  
Why should *Titania* croffe her *Oberon*?

*Ibid.* 118-9.

*Bot.* Let mee play the Lyon too, I will roare that  
I will doe any man good to heare me.

*Ibid.*, I. ii. 73-4.

• *Tyta.* I pray thee gentle mortall, sing againe,  
Mine eare is much enamored of thy note;

*Ibid.*, III. i. 144-5.

*Tyta.* Out of this wood, do not desire to goe,  
Thou shalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no.

*Ibid.*, 159-60.

*Lear.* Thou hast her *France*, let her be thine, for we  
Haue no such Daughter, nor shall euer see  
That face of hers againe, therefore be gone,  
Without our Grace, our Loue, our Benizon:  
Come Noble *Burgundie*. *King Lear*, I. i. 265-9.

'Tis true, 'tis day, what though it be?

*Donne, Poems*, 1633, p. 212.

Nor is this much to beleeve, as we have reason, we  
owe this faith unto History:

*Browne, Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 19.

God hath not made a creature that can comprehend  
him, 'tis the priuiledge of his owne nature;

*Ibid.*, p. 22.

Hence in rapid or excited speech the comma

may be the only sign of punctuation. For instance, the hurried speech of the brothers in *Comus* when the cry they have heard comes nearer :

2 *Bro.* Heav'n keepe my sifter, agen agen and neere,  
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

*Eld: bro.* Ile hallow,  
If he be friendly he comes well, if not  
Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

Milton, *A Mask*, 1637, ll. 486-9 (p. 17).

*Bot.* A Calender, a Calender, looke in the Almanack, finde out Moone-shine, finde out Moone-shine.

*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, III. i. 55-7.

There I haue another bad match, a bankrout, a prodigall, who dare scarce shew his head on the Ryalto, a begger that was vsd to come so smug vpon the Mart: let him look to his bond, he was wont to call me Vsurer, let him looke to his bond, he was wont to lend money for a Christian curtisie, let him looke to his bond.

*The Merchant of Venice*, III. i. 48-54.

Why there, there, there, there, a diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Franckford, the curse neuer fell vpon our Nation till now, I neuer felt it till now, two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious iewels:

*Ibid.*, 90-4.

The three preceding passages also serve to illustrate the almost invariable use of the comma where the connexion of thought is emphasized by parallel clauses or echoed words. Compare the following:

*Hel.* Cal you me faire? that faire againe vnſay,  
*Demetrius* loues you faire: O happie faire!

*A Midſommer nights Dreame*, I. i. 181-2.

It cannot be but thou haſt mured him,  
So ſhould a mutrherer [*read* murtherer] looke, ſo dead,  
ſo grim. *Ibid.*, III. ii. 56-7.

*Iſab.* There is a vice that moſt I doe abhorre,  
And moſt deſire ſhould meet the blow of Juſtice;  
For which I would not plead, but that I muſt,  
For which I muſt not plead, but that I am  
At warre, twixt will, and will not.

*Aug.* Well: the matter?

• *Iſab.* I haue a brother is condemn'd to die,  
I doe beſeech you let it be his fault,  
And not my brother. . . .

*Aug.* Condemne the fault, and not the actor of it,  
Why euery fault's condemn'd ere it be done:

*Measure for Measure*, II. ii. 29-38.

*Romeo* goodnight, Ile to my Truckle bed,  
This Field-bed is to cold for me to ſleepe,  
Come ſhall we go? *Romeo and Iuliet*, II. i. 39-41.

That uſe is not forbidden uſery,  
Which happies thoſe that pay the willing lone;  
That's for thy ſelfe to breed an other thee,  
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,  
Ten times thy ſelfe were happier then thou art,  
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee, *Sonnet* vi.

Is it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,  
That thou conſum'ſt thy ſelfe in ſingle life?  
Ah; if thou iſſuleſſe ſhalt hap to die,  
The world will waile thee like a makeleſſe wife,  
The world wilbe thy widdow and ſtill weepe,

*Sonnet* ix.

Lou's not Times foole, though roſie lips and cheek's  
 Within his bending ſickles compaſſe come, '  
 Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,  
*Sonnet cxvi.*

2. *Vocative followed but not preceded by a comma.*

But note me ſignior.

*Ant.* Marke you this *Baffanio*,  
*The Merchant of Venice*, I. iii. 98.

*Ant.* Well *Shylocke*, fhall we be beholding to you ?  
*Ibid.*, 106.

*Ant.* Yes *Shylocke*, I will ſeale vnto this bond.  
*Ibid.*, 172.

*Ant.* Hie thee gentle *Jew*.  
*Ibid.*, 178.

Why doſt thou bull, and bore ſo ſeelily  
 Diſſemble weakneſſe . . . ?

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 37.

*Eld: bro.* Peace brother, be not over exquiſite  
 To caſt the faſhion of uncertaine evils,  
Milton, *A Maſk*, 1637, l. 359 (p. 13).

Fly envious *Time*, till thou run out thy race,  
Milton, *On Time* (*Poems*, 1645, p. 19).

Com penſive Nun, devout and pure,  
Milton, *Il Penſeroſo*, 31 (*Ibid.*, p. 38).

3. *Vocative without commas.*

Now infidell I haue thee on the hip.

*The Merchant of Venice*, iv. i. 335.

*Seb.* I prethee foolish greeke depart from me,

*Twelfth Night*, iv. i. 19.

Come my yong fouldier put vp your yron :

*Ibid.*, 43.

Now *Thomas Mowbray* do I turne to thee,

*Richard the Second*, i. i. 35.

*Kent.* To be acknowledg'd Madam is ore-pai'd,

*King Lear*, iv. vii. 4.

Be by good Madam when we do awake him,

*Ibid.*, 23.

For thee oppressed King I am cast downe,

*Ibid.*, v. iii. 5.

Within thine owne bud burieft thy content,

And tender chorle makft wast in niggarding :

*Sonnet i.*

Vnthriftie louelineffe why dost thou spend, . . .

*Sonnet iv.*

*Raffe.* O thou hast a sweet life Mariner to be pinde  
in a few boordes,

Lyly, *Gallathea*, i. iv. 20 (ed. Bond).

Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,

And do what ere thou wilt swift-footed time

To the wide world and all her fading sweets :

*Sonnet xix.*



## 22 *Vocative without commas*

Thou funne art halfe as happy'as wee,  
In that the world's contracted thus.

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 200.

*Eld. Bro.* Why prethee shepheard  
How durst thou then thy selfe approach so neere. . .  
Milton, *A Mask*, 1637, ll. 615-6 (p. 21).

Lift Ladie be not coy, Ibid., 737 (p. 25).

Impostor doe not charge most innocent nature, . . .  
Ibid., 762 (p. 26).

### 4. *Imperative without comma.*

Modern printing usually has a comma in the following instances, which the modernized texts of Shakespeare treat inconsistently. The punctuation without a comma is, however analogous with such cases as 'See where he comes', 'See that it is done.'

O worthy *Stephano*,  
Looke what a wardrobe heere is for thee.  
*The Tempest*, iv. i. 223-5.

Looke who comes yonder :  
*The Merry Wines of Windsor*, II. ii. 161-2.

*Mar.* Looke with what courteous action  
It wafts you to a more remoued ground :  
*Hamlet*, I. iv. 60-1.

. . . look you how pale he glares, Ibid., III. iv. 124.  
Looke where he goes euen now out at the Portall.  
Ibid., I. 135.

*Imperative without comma* 23

Lift what worke he makes  
Among'tt your clouen Army. *Coriolanus*, I. iv. 20-1.

Looke what an vnthrif in the world doth fpend  
Shifts but his place, *Sonnet ix.*

Looke whom ſhe beſt indow'd, ſhe gaue the more;  
*Sonnet xi.*

5. *Appositional phrase without comma.*

. . . if my Vncle thy baniſhed father had baniſhed  
thy Vncle the Duke my Father, . . .  
*As you like it*, I. ii. 9-11.

When Ificles hang by the wall,  
And Dicke the Sphepherd [*read* Shepherd] blowes  
his naile; *Loues Labour's loſt*, v. ii. 920-1.

\* . . . and then the Boy his Clarke  
That tooke ſome paines in writing, he begg'd mine,  
*The Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 181-2.

. . . if I die for it, (as no leſſe is threatned me) the  
King my old Maſter muſt be relieued.  
*King Lear*, III. iii. 18-20.

*Meſ. Cæſar* I bring thee word  
*Menacrates* and *Menas* famous Pyrates  
Makes the Sea ſerue them,  
*Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. iv. 47-9.

But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,  
And conſtant ſtars in them I read ſuch art . . .  
*Sonnet xiv.*

O let me true in loue but truly write, *Sonnet xxi.*

I thy ARTHVR am  
 Tranflated to a ftarre;  
 Jonson, *The Speeches at Prince Henriess Barriers*  
 (Folio 1616, p. 966).

Come fir TYRANNE lordly LOVE,  
 You that awe the gods aboue,  
 Jonson, *Loue freed from Ignorance* (Ibid., p. 984).

6. *Comma marking a metrical pause.*

In the following instances the effect of the comma is to give a momentary check to the rhythm and fix attention on the words which follow.

And nothing gainst Times fieth can make defence  
 Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.  
*Sonnet xii.*

A beautiful and suggestive pointing: the alliteration of 'breed' and 'braue' carries on the line to the pause where the voice seems to falter at the thought of the final parting. The passage is ruined by the modern punctuation,

And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence  
 Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.  
 Similar in rhythm and equally spoilt by modern editors is

Then happy I that loue and am beloued  
 Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued.  
*Sonnet xxv.*

## Comma marking a metrical pause 25

Compare the following:

*Lad.* That fame Villaine *Romeo*.

*Iul.* Villaine and he, be many Miles affunder :  
God pardon <him>, I doe with all my heart :  
And yet no man like he, doth grieue my hoart [*read*  
heart]. *Romeo and Iuliet*, III. v. 81-4.

For neuer was a Storie of more Wo,  
Then this of *Iuliet*, and her *Romeo*.

*Ibid.*, v. iii. 309-10.

O're my spirit  
The [*read* Thy] full supremacie thou knew'ft, and that  
Thy becke, might from the bidding of the Gods  
Command mee.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, III. ix. 58-61.

My refidence in *Rome*, at one *Filorio's*,  
Who, to my Father was a Friend, to me  
Knowne but by Letter ; *Cymbeline*, I. i. 97-9.

Thus will I crucifie, my cruell shee ;

Drayton, *Ideas Mirrour*, 1594, Amour 15, l. 17  
(sig. C 4).

It is noteworthy that this comma occurs at  
the end of the line.

*Hero.* O God of loue ! I know he doth deferue,  
As much as may be yeelded to a man :  
But Nature neuer fram'd a womans heart,  
Of powder stufte then that of *Beatrice* :

*Much adoe about Nothing*, III. i. 47-50.

Or who is he so fond will be the tombe,  
Of his selfe loue . . . ? *Sonnet* iii.

So thou through windowes of thine age shalt see,  
Difpight of wrinkles this thy goulden time. *Ibid.*

## 26 *Comma marking a metrical pause*

Vnthrifty louelineffe why dost thou spend,  
Vpon thy selfe thy beauties legacy? *Sonnet iv.*

Then let not winters wragged hand deface,  
In thee thy summer ere thou be distil'd :  
Make sweet some viall; treasure thou some place,  
With beautits [*read* beauties] treasure ere it be selfe  
kil'd : *Sonnet vi.*

Loe in the Orient when the gracious light,  
Lifts vp his burning head, *Sonnet vii.*

Nay if you read this line, remember not,  
The hand that writ it, *Sonnet lxxi.*

My foule doth tell my body that he may,  
Triumph in loue, *Sonnet cli.*

In this last passage the pause after 'may' suspends the voice for a moment before the ringing note of 'triumph' in the line which follows.

Then, as all my foules bee,  
Emparadif'd in you, *Donne, Poems, 1633, p. 215.*  
If then at first wife Nature had,  
Made women either good or bad, *Ibid., p. 222.*

### 7. *The emphasizing comma.*

Closely connected with the preceding, but differing inasmuch as it is rhetorical rather than metrical, is the use of the comma to mark emphasis. In this use the comma follows the stressed word. Sometimes the two uses overlap: the beautiful instances

## *The emphasizing comma*    27

from Donne (p. 30), might be placed in either section.

*Pompey.* No *Anthony* take the lot: but first or last, your fine Egyptian cookerie shall haue the fame, I haue heard that *Iulius Cæsar*, grew fat with feasting there.

*Anth.* You haue heard much.

*Pom.* I haue faire meaning Sir.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, II. vi. 62-6.

The comma after '*Iulius Cæsar*' points the innuendo with a significant pause. The real reference is of course to Antony himself. Here, if anywhere in the Folio, we have a punctuation expressly intended to guide the actor; it is equivalent to a stage direction.

My heart to her, but as guest-wise sojourn'd,  
And now to *Helen* it is home return'd,

*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, III. ii. 171-2.

*Moon.* This lanthorne doth the horned Moone present: My selfe, the man i'th Moone doth seeme to be.

*Ibid.*, v. i. 250-1.

In our remoue, be thou at full, our selfe:

*Measure for Measure*, I. i. 43.

Was, is not is:

*As you like it*, III. iv. 31.

Your If, is the onely peace-maker: much vertue in if.

*Ibid.*, v. iv. 108-9.

*Luc.* I, why not? Grace, is Grace, despite of all controuersie: *Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 26-7.

Loue, is a smoake made with the fume of sighes,

*Romeo and Iuliet*, I. i. 196.

## 28      *The emphasizing comma*

As gentle, and as iocond, as to ielt,  
Go I to fight: Truth, hath a quiet brest.

*Richard the Second*, I. iii. 95-6.

*Surrey*. Dishonourable Boy;  
That Lye, shall lie so heauy on my Sword,  
That it shall render Vengeance, and Reuenge,  
Till thou the Lye-giuer, and that Lye, doe lye  
In earth as quiet, as thy Fathers Scull.

*Ibid.*, IV. i. 65-9.

*Wife*. I haue giuen ouer, I will speake no more,  
Do what you will: your Wisedome, be your guide.

*King Henry the Fourth*, Part II, II. iii. 5-6.

And with ridiculous and aukward action,  
(Which Slanderer, he imitation call's)  
He Pageants vs. *Troylus and Cressida*, I. iii. 149-51.  
Which of you shall we say doth loue vs most,  
That we, our largest bountie may extend. . . .

*King Lear*, I. i. 53-4.

Is it the fashon, that discarded Fathers,  
Should haue thus little mercy on their flesh:

*Ibid.*, III. iv. 71-2.

. . . good Friend be gone,  
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,  
Thee, they may hurt. *Ibid.*, IV. i. 15-17.

My boone I make it, that you know me not,  
Till time, and I, thinke meet. *Ibid.*, IV. vii. 10-11.

'Tis wonder that thy life and wits, at once  
Had not concluded all. *Ibid.*, 41-2.

All other things, to their destruction draw,  
Only our love hath no decay;  
This, no to morrow hath, nor yesterday,

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 213.

## *The emphasizing comma* 29

Impunity and remission, for certain are the bane of  
a Commonwealth,

Milton, *Areopagitica*, 1644, p. 17.

Emphasis is often due to contrast, and on  
this principle the comma serves to point the  
antithesis.

2. When the Hurley-burley's done,  
When the Battaile's loft, and wonne.

*Macbeth*, I. i. 3-4.

. . . our felues will heare  
Th' accuser, and the accused, freely speake ;

*Richard the Second*, I. i. 16-17.

Discharge my followers : let them hence away,  
From *Richards* Night, to *Bullingbrookes* faire Day.

*Ibid.*, III. ii. 217-8.

For I haue giuen here my Soules consent,  
T' vndeck, the pompous Body of a King ;  
Made Glory base ; a Soueraigntie [*read* Soueraigne], a  
Slaue ;

Proud Maiestie, a Subiect ; State, a Pefant.

*Ibid.*, IV. i. 249-52.

Sleeping, and waking, oh defend me still.

*Richard the Third*, v. iii. 118.

We will vnite the White Rose, and the Red.

*Ibid.*, v. iv. 32.

. . . fo our Decrees,  
Dead to infliction, to themfelues are dead,  
And libertie, plucks Iustice by the nose ;

*Measure for Measure*, I. iii. 27-9.

*Hele.* How happy some, ore other some can be ?

*A Midfommer nights Dreame*, I. i. 226.



## 30 *The emphasizing comma*

*Lys.* Thou canst compell, no more then the  
entreate. *A Midsummer nights Dreame*, III. ii. 249.

. . . the Noble & true-harted Kent banish'd; his  
offence, honesty. *King Lear*, I. ii. 129-31.

Timon will to the Woods, where he shall finde  
Th' vnkindest Beast, more kinder then Mankinde.  
*Timon of Athens*, IV. i. 35-6.

Rome, and her Rats, are at the point of battell,  
*Coriolanus*, I. i. 168.

And when a woman woes, what womans sonne,  
Will sourely leaue her till he haue preuailed.  
*Sonnet xli.*

And now good morrow to our waking soules,  
Which watch not one another out of feare;  
For love, all love of other fights controules,  
And makes one little roome, an every where.  
Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 165 (= 195).

Or, as true deaths, true maryages untie,  
*Ibid.*, p. 197.  
When with my browne, my gray haire equall bee;  
*Ibid.*, p. 201.

Small are the abuses, and fleight are the faultes,  
that nowe in Theaters escape the Poets pen: But tal  
Cedars, from little graynes shoote high: great Okes,  
from flender rootes spread wide: Large streames,  
from narrow springes runne farre: One little sparke,  
fyers a whole Citie:

S. Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, sig. C 4 verso.

On the same principle, when two words of  
similar sound and spelling are placed side by



### 32 *Comma equivalent to a dash*

the brother of Dol Common, who is passing for a lady. Surly, not believing him, puts this question with an ironical pause before 'brother'.

Peace, you, ban-dogge, peace :

Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour*, II. iii.  
(Folio 1616, p. 107).

And, we must glorifie,  
A mushrome ? one of yesterday ? a fine speaker ?  
Jonson, *Catiline*, II. (Ibid., p. 700).

### 9. *Comma marking interrupted speech.*

*Auf.* Well ruffian, I must pocket vp these wrongs,  
Because,

*Bast.* Your breeches best may carry them.

*King John*, III. i. 200-1.

*Cam.* Sir (my Lord)

I could doe this, and that with no rash Potion,  
But with a lingring Dram, that should not worke  
Malicioufly, like Poyson : But I cannot  
Beleeue this Crack to be in my dread Mistresse  
(So foueraignely being Honorable.)  
I haue lou'd thee,

*Leo.* Make that thy question, and goe rot :

*The Winters Tale*, I. ii. 318-24.

*Kear* [read *Lear*]. Now by *Apollo*,

*Lent* [read *Kent*]. Now by *Apollo*, King

Thou fwear'st thy Gods in vaine.

*King Lear*, I. i. 162-3.

*Ben.* Why *Romeo* art thou mad ?

*Rom.* Not mad, but bound more then a mad man is:  
Shut vp in prifon, kept without my foode,

## Comma marking interrupted speech 33

Whipt and tormented : and Godden good fellow,  
*Sei.* Godgigoden, I pray fir can you read?

*Romeo and Iuliet*, I. ii. 55-9.

In the play of *Eastward Hoe*, II. i., the riotous apprentice Quicksilver, drunk and dismissed by his master Touchstone, has a final fling before he quits the shop:

*Quic.* . . . and now I tell thee *Touchstone*—

*Touch.* Good fir.

*Quic.* *When this eternall substance of my soule,*

*Touch.* Well faid, chandge your gould ends for your play ends.

• *Quic.* *Did liue imprison'd in my wanton flesh.*

*Touch.* What then fir?

*Quic.* *I was a Courtier in the Spanish Court, . . .*

Quarto, 1605, sig. B 4.

At first Touchstone interrupts the quotation, and the comma after 'soule' indicates the break. But after 'flesh' Quicksilver himself stops short in drunken stupidity, as Touchstone's question shows; the period in this case is correct.

That which rips my bosome  
Almost to'th heart's,

*Arcitg.* Our Vncle *Creon*.

*Pal.* He,

A most unbounded Tyrant, . . .

*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, I. ii. (Quarto, 1634, sig. C verso).

*Arc.* Deere Cofin *Palamon*,

*Pal.* Cofoner *Arcite*, give me language, fuch

As thou hast shewd me feate.

*Ibid.*, III. i. (sig. F 2 verso).

10. *Comma marking the logical subject.*

The logical subject is rounded off by a comma interposed between it and the predicate. The effect is to convert the noun and adjunct—whether this be a single word, a phrase, or a clause—into a composite expression.

The Cowslips tall, her pensioners bee,  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, II. i. 10.

If he compact of iarres, grow Musically,  
We shall haue shortly discord in the Sphaeres:  
*As you like it*, II. vii. 5-6.

But he his owne affections counsellor,  
Is to himselfe (I will not say how true)  
*Romeo and Iuliet*, I. i. 152-3.

Contagious fogges : Which falling in the Land,  
Hath euerie petty Riuer made so proud,  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, II. i. 90-1.

This sport well carried, shall be chronicled.  
*Ibid.*, III. ii. 240.

At whose approach Ghosts wandring here and there,  
Troope home to Church-yards; *Ibid.*, 381-2.

*And the issue there create,*  
*Euer shall be fortunate:* *Ibid.*, v. ii. 35-6.

And the queint Mazes in the wanton greene,  
For lacke of tread are vndistinguishable.  
*Ibid.*, II. i. 99-100.

... none of noble fort,  
Would so offend a Virgin, *Ibid.*, III. ii. 159-60.

## Comma marking the logical subject 35

And the blots of Natures hand,  
Shall not in their issue stand.      *Ibid.*, v. ii. 39-40.

Not all the Dukes of watrifu Burgundy,  
Can buy this vnpriz'd precious Maid of me.  
   *King Lear*, I. i. 261-2.

But doe it when the next thing he espies,  
May be the Lady.  
   *A Midsommer nights Dreame*, II. i. 262-3.

For beafts that meete me, runne away for feare,  
   *Ibid.*, II. ii. 95.

Could not this make thee know,  
The hate I beare thee, made me leaue thee fo?  
   *Ibid.*, III. ii. 189-90.

From Tamworth thither, is but one dayes march.  
   *Richard the Third*, v. ii. 13.

*Pari.* Younger then she, are happy mothers made.  
   *Romeo and Iuliet*, I. ii. 12.

Beaten for Loyaltie,  
Excited me to Treason.      *Cymbeline*, v. v. 345-6.

*Greg.* To moue, is to stir: and to be valiant, is to stand:  
   *Romeo and Iuliet*, I. i. 11-12.

No, no, 'tis all mens office, to speak patience  
To those that wring vnder the load of sorrow:  
   *Much adoe about Nothing*, v. i. 27-8.

'tis our fast intent,  
To shake all Cares and Businesse from our Age,  
   *King Lear*, I. i. 40-1.

That she may feelee,  
How sharper then a Serpents tooth it is,  
To haue a thanklesse Childe.      *Ibid.*, I. iv. 311-13.

### 36 *Comma marking the logical subject*

*Post.* Should we be taking leaue  
As long a terme as yet we haue to liue,  
The loathnesse to depart, would grow : Adieu.

*Cymbeline*, I. i. 106-8.

As 'tis euer common,  
That men are merriest, when they are from home.

*Henry the Fifth*, I. ii. 271-2.

But 'tis a common prooffe,  
That Lowlynesse is young Ambitions Ladder,

*Julius Cæsar*, II. i. 21-2.

In Philofophy where truth seemes double-faced,  
there is no man more paradoxicall then my self;

Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 11.

. . . therefore to pry into the maze of his Counsels,  
is not onely folly in Man, but presumption even in  
Angels;

*Ibid.*, p. 26.

This generall and indifferent temper of mine, doth  
more neerely dispose mee to this noble vertue.

*Ibid.*, p. 136.

#### 11. *Comma marking off adverbial phrase or clause.*

The principle was extended to adverbial phrases and clauses. It is as if, in the rhythmical punctuation formerly adopted, the eye of a contemporary reader took in the construction at a glance provided he knew when these minor impediments to the run of the sentence were disposed of.

With teares augmenting the fresh mornings dew,  
Adding to cloudes, more cloudes with his deepe  
fighes,

*Romeo and Iuliet*, I. i. 137-8.

## Comma marking adverbial phrase 37

*Rom.* Alas that loue, whose view is muffled still,  
Should without eyes, see path-wayses to his will :  
Ibid., 176-7.

*Tib.* This by his voice, should be a *Mountague*.  
Ibid., I. v. 58.

I would not for the wealth of all the towne,  
Here in my house do him disparagement :  
Ibid., 73-4.

*Rom.* If I prophane with my vnworthiest hand,  
This holy shrine, . . .  
Ibid., 97-8.

. . . vnderneath whose arme,  
An enuious thrust from *Tybalt*, hit the life  
Of stout *Mercutio*, . . .  
Ibid., III. i. 173-5.

Take from my mouth, the with of happy yeares,  
*Richard the Second*, I. iii. 94.

Lay on our, Royall sword, your banisht hands ;  
Ibid., 179.

*Bag.* Then set before my face, the Lord *Aumerle*.  
Ibid., IV. i. 6.

Be it so she will not heere before your Grace,  
Consent to marrie with *Demetrius*,  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, I. i. 39-40.

• . . though *Demetrius* •  
Doe as a monster, flie my prefence thus.  
Ibid., II. ii. 96-7.

Thou like an Exorcist, hast coniur'd vp  
My mortified Spirit. *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 323-4.

This very time, wherein we two now liue,  
Shall in the compasse, wound the Muses more,



### 38 *Comma marking adverbial phrase*

Then all the old *English* ignorance before ;  
Drayton, *To Master George Sandys*, l. 77  
(*Poems*, 1627, p. 189).

What needs my *Shakespear* for his honour'd Bones,  
The labour of an age in piled Stones,  
Milton, *On Shakespear* (*Poems*, 1645, p. 27).

If they be two, they are two fo  
As stiffe twin compasses are two,  
Thy foule the fixt foot, makes no shew  
To move, but doth, if the'other doe.  
Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 164 (= 194).

Such wilt thou be to mee, who must  
Like th'other foot, obliquely runne, Ibid.

... the Church of *England*, to whose faith I am a  
sworne subject, and therefore in a double obligation,  
subscribe unto her Articles, and endeavour to observe  
her Constitutions:

Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 8.

... the Bishop of *Rome*, whom as a temporall Prince,  
we owe the duty of good language : Ibid., p. 9.

### 12. *Comma between accusative and dative.*

I haue begun,  
And now I giue my sensuall race, the reine,  
*Measure for Measure*, II. iv. 160-1.

Thou hast *Sebastian* done good feature, shame.  
*Twelfth Night*, III. iv. 402.

I could haue giuen my Vnkles Grace, a flout,  
*Richard the Third*, II. iv. 24.

## *Comma between acc. and dat.* 39

Thou ow'lt the Worme no Silke; the Beaft, no  
Hide; the Sheepe, no Wooll; the Cat, no perfume.

*King Lear*, III. iv. 106-8.

I promised your Grace, a Hunters peale.

*Titus Andronicus*, II. ii. 13.

and you come,

To giue their bedde, ioy and prosperitie.

*A Midsommer nights Dreame*, II. i. 72-3

(Fisher's Quarto, 1600, sig. B 4).

Compare the use with the preposition :

And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that

Which simpleneffe and merit purchaseth.

*Much adoe about Nothing*, III. i. 69-70.

### 13. *Comma between object and complement.*

The antithetic instances in this section  
might also be included in § 7.

Or shall we thinke the subtil-witted French,  
Coniurers and Sorcerers,

*Henry the Sixt*, Part I, I. i. 25-6.

Were it to call King *Edwards* Widdow, Sifter,

*Richard the Third*, I. i. 109.

The King that calles your beauteous Daughter Wife,  
Familiarly shall call thy *Dorset*, Brother :

*Ibid.*, IV. iv. 316-7.

... and then the Prince (my Brother) and the  
Princesse (my Sifter) call'd my Father, Father ;

*The Winters Tale*, V. ii. 161-2.

Thus we . . . make the Rabble

Call our Cares, Feares; *Coriolanus*, III. i. 134-6.

We cannot cal her winds and waters, fighes and teares: They are greater stormes and Tempests then Almanackes can report.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. ii. 157-60.

That she did make defect, perfection, *Ibid.*, II. ii. 239.

I' th' last nights storme, I such a fellow saw;

Which made me thinke a Man, a Worme.

*King Lear*, IV. i. 32-3.

Why, this would make a man, a man of Salt

To vse his eyes for Garden water-pots.

*Ibid.*, IV. vi. 200-1.

. . . her suffrance made

Almost each pang, a death.

*King Henry the Eighth*, V. i. 68-9.

. . . the tydings that I bring

Will make my boldnesse, manners. *Ibid.*, 160-1.

That makes these oddes, all euen.

*Measure for Measure*, III. i. 41.

*Pedro*. Wilt thou make a trust, a transgression?

*Much adoe about Nothing*, II. i. 234-5.

*Cym*. Thou took'st a Begger, would'st haue made my Throne, a Seate for basenesse.

*Cymbeline*, I. i. 141-2.

*Post*. Make note [read not] Sir

Your losse, your Sport: *Ibid.*, II. iv. 47-8.

Thus much of this will make

Blacke, white; fowle, faire; wrong, right;

Base, Noble; Old, young; Coward, valiant.

*Timon of Athens*, IV. iii. 28-9.

Thy company, if I slept not very well  
A nights, would make me, an errant foole, with  
questions.

Jonson, *Catiline*, II. (Folio, 1616, p. 697).

14. *Comma before a noun clause.*

Know, that we haue diuided  
In three our Kingdome: *King Lear*, I. i. 39-40.

*Bag.* My Lord *Aumerle*, I know your daring tongue  
Scornes to vnſay, what it hath once deliuer'd.

*Richard the Second*, IV. i. 8-9.

They ſay, the Biſhop and *Northumberland*  
Are fiftie thouſand ſtrong.

*King Henry the Fourth*, Part II, III. i. 95-6.

Thou know'ſt, that we two went to Schoole together:  
*Julius Cæſar*, V. V. 26.

*Mene.* I cannot hope,  
*Cæſar* and *Anthony* ſhall well greet together;  
*Anthony and Cleopatra*, II. i. 38-9.

*Ant.* I learne, you take things ill, which are not ſo:  
*Ibid.*, II. ii. 33.

Yet if I knew,  
What Hoope ſhould hold vs ſtaunch . . .  
*Ibid.*, 120-1.

And therefore do we, what we are commanded.  
*Titus Andronicus*, V. ii. 164

I, oft, haue heard him ſay, how he admir'd  
Men of your large profeſſion,  
Jonson, *Volpone*, I. iii. (Folio, 1616, p. 456).

## 42 Comma before a noun clause

Mos. He ha's no faith in phyfick : he do's thinke,  
Most of your Doctors are the greater danger,  
And worfe difeafe, t'escape.

Jonson, *Volpone*, I. iv. (Folio, 1616, p. 458).

Tell me, where all past yeares are,

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 196.

Goe tell Court-huntfmen, that the King will ride,

*Ibid.*, p. 169 (= 199).

Or doth a feare, that men are true, torment you?

*Ibid.*, p. 200.

### 15. Comma before the 'defining' relative.

This construction is often printed without the comma.

*Mort.* This is the deadly fpite, that angers me,

*King Henry the Fourth*, Part I, III. i. 191.

*Shal.* Hah, Coufin *Silence*, that thou hadst feene  
that, that this Knight and I haue feene :

*Ibid.*, Part II, III. ii. 228-9.

he furnifhd me

From mine owne Library, with volumes, that  
I prize aboue my Dukedome.

*The Tempest*, I. ii. 166-8.

*Lou.* This is about that, which the Byfhop fpake.

*King Henry the Eighth*, v. i. 84.

Ile difcouer that, which fhall vndo the Florentine.

*All's Well, that Ends Well*, IV. i. 78-9.

Thofe wounds heale ill, that men doe giue them-  
felues :

*Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii. 230.

*Comma before 'defining' relative* 43

I wrote the Letter, that thy Father found,  
*Titus Andronicus*, v. i. 106.

This is the Feast, that I haue bid her to,  
*Ibid.*, v. ii. 193.

I am a man, that haue not done your loue  
All the worst offices:  
*Jonson, Volpone*, i. iii. (Folio, 1616, p. 456).

I, by loves limbecke, am the graue  
Of all, that's nothing. *Donne, Poems*, 1633, p. 187.

Or say that now  
We are not just those persons, which we were?  
*Ibid.*, p. 197.

This were the worst, that it could say,  
*Ibid.*, p. 212.

And that I lov'd my heart and honor so,  
That I would not from him, that had them, goe.  
*Ibid.*

16. *Comma before 'as'.*

*Beat.* Is it possible Dildaine should die, while  
shee hath such meete foode to feede it, as signior  
Benedicke? *Much adoe about Nothing*, i. i. 125-7.

It seemes she hangs vpon the cheeke of night,  
As a rich Iewel in an Æthiops eare:  
*Romeo and Iuliet*, i. v. 49-50.

. . . they were all like one another, as halfe pence are,  
*As you like it*, iii. ii. 376-7.

. . . a drumme is readie brac'd,  
That shall reuerberate all, as lowd as thine.  
*King Iohn*, v. ii. 169-70.

## 44                      *Comma before 'as'*

And haue preuail'd as much on him, as you.  
*Richard the Third*, I. i. 131.

A Milke-top, one that neuer in his life  
 Felt so much cold, as ouer shooes in Snow :  
*Ibid.*, v. iii. 326-7.

*Corio*. You common cry of Curs, whose breath I  
 hate,  
 As reeke a'th' rotten Fennes :  
*Coriolanus*, III. iii. 118-9.

Let's carue him, as a Dish fit for the Gods,  
*Julius Caesar*, II. i. 173.

. . . no Instrument  
 Of halfe that worth, as those your Swords ;  
*Ibid.*, III. i. 154-5.

Whilst I, at whom they shot, sit here shot-free,  
 And as vn-hurt of enuy, as vnhit.  
*Jonson, Poetaster, 'To the Reader'* (Folio, 1616,  
 p. 349).

Will it not serue your turn to do, as did your mothers ?  
*Donne, Poems*, 1633, p. 200.

### 17. *Comma before 'but' (= 'except').*

*Cel.* You know my Father hath no childe, but I,  
*As you like it*, I. ii. 18-19.

. . . and being no other, but as she is, I doe not like  
 her. *Much adoe about Nothing*, I. i. 183-4.

*Cesario*,  
 Thou knowst no lesse, but all :  
*Twelfth Night*, I. iv. 12-13.

And who doth leade them, but a paltry Fellow ?

*Richard the Third*, v. iii. 324.

. . . whose fence

No more can feele, but his owne wringing.

*Henry the Fifth*, iv. i. 255-6.

*Mer.* True, I talke of dreames :

Which are the children of an idle braine,

Begot of nothing, but vaine phantasie,

*Romeo and Iuliet*, I. iv. 97-9.

Transported with no worse nor better guard,

But with a knaue of common hire, a Gundolier,

*Othello*, I. i. 125-6.

. . . for men like butter-flies,

Shew not their mealie wings, but to the Summer :

*Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii. 78-9.

. . . none our parts so poore,

But was a 'race of Heauen.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. iii. 36-7.

Had nature lent thee, but thy Mothers looke,

Villaine thou might'st haue bene an Emperour.

*Titus Andronicus*, v. i. 29-30.

18. Comma before 'than'.

Better a witty foole, then a foolish wit.

*Twelfth Night*, I. v. 38-9.

And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,

Then flye to others that we know not of.

*Hamlet*, III. i. 81-2.



*Rom.* Alacke there lies more perill in thine eye,  
Then twenty of their Swords,

*Romeo and Iuliet*, II. ii. 71-2.

*Rom.* A Gentleman Nurfe, that loues to heare  
himfelfe talke, and will fpeake more in a minute, then  
he will ftand to in a Moneth. *Ibid.*, II. iv. 156-8.

. . . more Courtship liues  
In carrion Flies, then *Romeo*: *Ibid.*, III. iii. 34-5.

*Torke.* Then he is more beholding to you, then I.

*Richard the Third*, III. i. 107.

I had rather haue  
Such men my Friends, then Enemies.

*Julius Cæsar*, v. iv. 28-9.

I am no more touch'd, then all *Priams* fonnes,

*Troylus and Cressida*, II. ii. 126.

Which hath an operation more diuine,  
Then breath or pen can giue expreffure to:

*Ibid.*, III. iii. 204-5.

A woman impudent and mannish growne,  
Is not more loth'd, then an effeminate man,  
In time of action:

*Ibid.*, 218-20.

*Leo.* A kinde ouerflow of kindneffe, there are no  
faces truer, then thofe that are fo wafh'd, how much  
better is it to weepe at ioy, then to ioy at weeping?

*Much adoe about Nothing*, I. i. 26-9.

*John.* I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then  
a rofe in his grace, . . . *Ibid.*, I. iii. 28-9.

19. *Comma before 'and', with no comma after.*

Thy felfe, and thy belongings  
 Are not thine owne fo proper, . . .  
*Measure for Measure*, I. i. 29-30.

Your brother, and his louer haue embrac'd ;  
 Ibid., I. iv. 40.

Shall quips and sentences, and thefe paper bullets of  
 the braine awe a man from the careere of his humour ?  
*Much adoe about Nothing*, II. iii. 260-2.

And I do doubt the hatch, and the difclofe  
 Will be fome danger, . . . *Hamlet*, III. i. 175-6.

Turne all her Mothers paines, and benefits  
 To laughter, and contempt :  
*King Lear*, I. iv. 310-1.

Some inuocate the Gods, fome fpirits of Hell,  
 And heauen, and earth do with their woes acquaint.  
 Drayton, *Ideas Mirrour*, 1594, Amour 18, l. 4  
 (sig. D verso).

Th' vnletter'd *Turke*, and rude *Barbarian* trades,  
 Where HOMER sang his lofty *Iliads* ;  
 Drayton, *To Maſter George Sandys*, l. 71  
 (*Poems*, 1627, p. 189).

ſince this  
 Both the yeares, and the dayes deep midnight is,  
 Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 188.

I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I  
 Did, till we lov'd, Ibid., p. 165 (= 195).

And ſweare  
 No where  
 Lives a woman true, and faire. Ibid., p. 196.

## 48 *Comma before 'and'*

Why dost thou thus,  
Through windowes, and through curtaines call on us?  
Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 169 (= 199).

To Love, and Griefe tribute of Verse belongs,  
Ibid., p. 205.

those usuall Satyrs, and invectives of the Pulpit may  
perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar,  
Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 9.

If therefore there rise any doubts in my way, I doe  
forget them, or at least defer them, till my better  
settled judgement, and more manly reason be able to  
resolve them;  
Ibid., p. 11.

therefore sometimes, and in some things there  
appears to mee as much divinity . . . Ibid., p. 30.

## 20. *Comma before 'or' and 'nor', with no comma after.*

The Iury passing on the Prisoners life  
May in the sworne-twelve haue a thiefe, or two  
Guiltier then him they try;  
*Measure for Measure*, II. i. 19-21.

*Isab.* Yes: I doe thinke that you might pardon him,  
And neither heauen, nor man grieue at the mercy.  
Ibid., II. ii. 49-50.

Nine, or ten times  
I had thought t'haue yerkd him here vnder the  
Ribbes.  
*Othello*, I. ii. 4-5.

*Tit.* Nor thou, nor he are any sonnes of mine,  
*Titus Andronicus*, I. i. 294.

## Comma before 'or' and 'nor' 49

But not to tell of good, or euil lucke, *Sonnet xiv.*

No *Spring*, nor *Summer* Beauty hath fuch grace,  
As I haue feen in one *Autumnall* face,

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 151.

Yet fhee

Will bee

Falfe, ere I come, to two, or three.

*Ibid.*, p. 197.

### 21. Comma before 'not', with no comma after.

And lay afide my high bloods Royalty,  
Which feare, not reuerence makes thee to except.

*Richard the Second*, I. i. 71-2.

Thou mak'st thy knife keene : but no mettall can,  
No, not the hangmans Axe beare halfe the keenneffe  
Of thy sharpe enuy.

*The Merchant of Venice*, IV. i. 124-6.

For the Dearth,

The Gods, not the Patricians make it,

*Coriolanus*, I. i. 76-7.

but if that were, w<sup>ch</sup> faith, not Philosophy hath yet  
thoroughly difproved,

Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 13.

### 22. Comma with inversion.

In rage, deafe as the fea; haftie as fire.

*Richard the Second*, I. i. 19.

A suggestive instance because of the contrast  
between the beginning and the end of the line.

*Duk.* Of Gouvernment, the properties to vnfold,  
Would seeme in me t' affect speech & discourse,  
*Measure for Measure*, I. i. 3-4.

... whose vnwished yoake,  
My foule consents not to giue foueraignty.  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, I. i. 81-2.

... whose scull, Ioue cramme with braines,  
*Twelfth Night*, I. v. 120-1.

*Vio.* Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white,  
Natures owne sweet, and cunning hand laid on:  
*Ibid.*, 259-60.

Free speech, and fearelesse, I to thee allow.  
*Richard the Second*, I. i. 123.

The last leaue of thee, takes my weeping eye.  
*Ibid.*, I. ii. 74.

*Nor.* Not so: euen through the hollow eyes of death,  
I spie life peering: *Ibid.*, II. i. 271-2.

Of Man and Beast, the infinite Maladie  
Crust you quite o're.  
*Timon of Athens*, III. vi. 109-10.

Plucke the lyn'd Crutch from thy old limping Sire,  
With it, beate out his Braines. *Ibid.*, IV. i. 14-15.

Plagues incident to men,  
Your potent and infectious Feauors, heape  
On Athens ripe for stroke. *Ibid.*, 21-3.

Be as a Plannetary plague, when Ioue  
Will o're some high-Vic'd City, hang his poyson  
In the ficke ayre: *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 109-11.

*Lady.* But in them, Nature's Coppie's not eterne.  
*Macbeth*, III. ii. 38.

## Comma with inversion

51

*That part, thou (Pisanio) must acte for me,*  
*Cymbeline, III. iv. 25-6.*

This attempt,  
I am Souldier too, . . . *Ibid., 185-6.*

Of all wilde beafts, preferue me from a tyranne;  
And of all tame, a flatterer.  
Jonson, *Seianus*, 1 (Folio, 1616, p. 370).

Yet him for this, my loue no whit disdained,  
*Sonnet xxxiii.*

Thy beames, so reverend, and strong  
Why shouldst thou thinke?  
Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 169 (= 199).

Still when, to where thou wert, I came . . .  
*Ibid., p. 211.*

Then as an Angell, face, and wings  
Of aire, not pure as it, yet pure doth weare,  
*Ibid., p. 211.*

But all such rules, loves magique can undoe,  
*Ibid., p. 214.*

Or if too hard and deepe  
This learning be, for a scratch'd name to teach,  
It, as a given deaths head keepe,  
Lovers mortalitie to preach, *Ibid., p. 215.*

### 23. *Relative followed by a comma.*

The use is confined to the relative after a preposition. This is necessarily detached from the verb, and the comma is inserted partly on the principle of the enclosing comma noted in

## 52 *Relative followed by a comma*

§ 10, partly because the arrangement of the words suggests an inversion.

There is our Commiffion,  
From which, we would not haue you warpe :  
*Measure for Measure*, I. i. 13-14.

At the which, let no man wonder.  
*A Midfommer nights Dreame*, v. i. 136.

For the which,  
He did arreft me with an Officer.  
*The Comedie of Errors*, v. i. 229-30.

*Ber.* A heauen on earth I haue won by wooing thee.  
*Di.* For which, liue long to thank both heauen & me,  
*All's Well, that Ends Well*, IV. ii. 66-7.

... Your fafety : for the which, my felfe and them  
Bend their beft ftudies, *King Iohn*, IV. ii. 50-1.

*West.* Good tidings (my Lord *Haftings*) for the  
which,  
I doe arreft thee (Traytor) of high Treafon :  
*King Henry the Fourth*, Part II, IV. ii. 107-8.

You did commit me :  
For which, I do commit into your hand,  
Th' vnftained Sword that you haue vs'd to beare :  
*Ibid.*, v. ii. 112-4.

*Purg.* The King hath heard them : to the which,  
as yet  
There is no Anfwer made.

*Henry the Fifth*, v. ii. 74-5.

For which, their Father  
Then old, and fond of yffue, tooke fuch forrow  
That he quit Being ; *Cymbeline*, I. i. 36-8.

*Relative followed by a comma* 53

And then I'll bring thee to the present bufinesse  
Which now's vpon's: without the which, this Story  
Were most impertinent. *The Tempest*, I. ii. 136-8.

Enioy your Mistris; from the whom, I see  
There's no disunction to be made,  
*The Winters Tale*, IV. iii. 541-2.

See Iustice done on *Aaron* that damn'd Moore,  
From whom, our heauy happes had their beginning:  
*Titus Andronicus*, V. iii. 201-2.

. . . for the multitude to be ingratefull, were to make  
a Monster of the multitude; of the which, we being  
members, should bring our felues to be monstrous  
members. *Coriolanus*, II. iii. 11-14.

To which, if he apply him,  
He may, perhaps, take a degree at *Tiburne*,  
Jonson, *The New Inne*, I. iii.  
(Quarto, 1631, sig. C 2).

24. *Comma marking ellipse of copula.*

My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, I. i. 188.

*Moon.* . . . the Lanthorne is the Moone; I, the man  
in the Moone; this thorne bush, my thorne bush;  
and this dog, my dog. *Ibid.*, V. i. 264-6.

*Isab.* So you must be y<sup>e</sup> first that giues this sentence,  
And hee, that suffers:  
*Measure for Measure*, II. ii. 106-7.

*Cla.* Death is a fearefull thing.

*Isa.* And shamed life, a hatefull. *Ibid.*, III. i. 114-5.



## 54 *Comma marking ellipse of copula*

*Ia.* All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women, meere Players;  
*As you like it*, II. vii. 139-40.

But passion lends them Power, time, meanes to meete,  
*Romeo and Iuliet*, Prol. to Act II, 13.

Wee'l calme the Duke of Norfolke; you, your son.  
*Richard the Second*, I. i. 159.

But thought's the flauie of Life, and Life, Times foole;  
*King Henry the Fourth*, Part I, v. iv. 81.

... the Noble & true-harted Kent banish'd; his  
offence, honesty. *King Lear*, I. ii. 129-31.

Many a time he danc'd thee on his knee:  
Sung thee asleepe, his Louing Brest, thy Pillow:  
*Titus Andronicus*, v. iii. 162-3.

This bed thy center is, these walls, thy spheare.  
Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 200.

Or if, when thou, the worlds soule, goest,  
It stay, tis but thy carkasse then,  
The fairest woman, but thy ghost,  
But corrupt wormes, the worthyest men.  
Ibid., p. 209.

## 25. *Comma marking the omission of the relative.*

*Mir.* Ther's nothing ill, can dwell in such a Temple,  
*The Tempest*, I. ii. 454.

Well, well: there's one yonder arrested, and carried  
to prison, was worth five thousand of you all.  
*Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 64-6.

## Omission of the relative 55

*Leo.* He hath an Vnckle heere in *Messina*, wil be very much glad of it.

*Much adoe about Nothing*, I. i. 18-19.

What man was he, talkt with you yesternight,

*Ibid.*, iv. i. 84.

*Luci.* Many do keepe their Chambers, are not ficke.

*Timon of Athens*, III. iv. 75.

But this same day

Must end that worke, the Ides of March begun.

*Julius Caesar*, v. i. 113-4.

*Cleo.* What should I do, I do not?

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. iii. 8.

*Enob.* But there is neuer a fayre Woman, ha's a true Face.

*Ibid.*, II. vi. 101-2.

... wee had very many there, could behold the Sunne, with as firme eyes as hee.

*Cymbeline*, I. iv. 12-14.

*Clot.* We haue yet many among vs, can gripe as hard as *Cassibulan*, . . .

*Ibid.*, III. i. 40-1.

And they are enuious, terme thee parasite.

Jonson, *Volpone*, I. i. (Folio, 1616, p. 452).

Onely you

(Of all the rest) are he, commands his loue:

*Ibid.*, I. iii. (*ibid.*, p. 455).

*I Sing the birth, was borne to night,*

Jonson, *A Hymne On the Nativitie of my Saviour*  
(Folio, 1640, *Vnderwoods*, p. 165).

I reade ore those, you writ a year agoe,

Drayton, *Of his Ladies not Comming to London*,

l. 96 (*Poems*, 1627, p. 187).

## 56      *Omission of the relative*

Th' opinion, the *Pythagorists* vphold,  
That the immortall soule doth transmigrate;  
    Drayton, *To Master William Browne*, l. 22  
    (*Poems*, 1627, p. 191).

The *Israelites* saw but that in his time, the natives  
of those Countries behold in ours.

    Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 45.

Frequently, however, this construction ἀπὸ  
νοῦ is indicated by running the sentence on  
without any mark of punctuation as in *Richard*  
*the Second*, II. i. 174:

In warre was neuer Lyon rag'd more fierce:

### 26. *The Semicolon.*

Where the comma is frequently employed,  
the semicolon is of value for heavier stopping,  
both to mark emphasis and to make the struc-  
ture of the sentence clear. Hence a writer  
like Ben Jonson, who may be roughly  
described as attempting to combine the  
logical and the rhythmical systems, was  
driven to use the semicolon more than most  
of his contemporaries. A single passage will  
show this—Mosca's praise of the parasite.

    And, yet,  
I meane not those, that haue your bare towne-arte,  
To know, who's fit to feede 'hem; haue no house,  
No family, no care, and therefore mould  
Tales for mens eares, to bait that sense; or get

Kitchin-inuention, and some stale receipts  
To please the belly, and the groine; nor those,  
With their court-dog-tricks, that can fawne, and fleere,  
Make their reuennue out of legs, and faces,  
Eccho my-Lord, and lick away a moath:  
But your fine, elegant rascall, that can rise,  
And stoope (almost together) like an arrow;  
Shoot through the aire, as nimbly as a starre;  
Turne short, as doth a swallow; and be here,  
And there, and here, and yonder, all at once;  
Present to any humour, all occasion;  
And change a visor, swifter, then a thought!  
This is the creature, had the art borne with him;  
Toiles not to learne it, but doth practife it  
Out of most excellent nature: and such sparkes,  
Are the true Parasites, other but their *Zani's*.

Jonson, *Volpone*, III. i. (Folio, 1616, p. 478).

Wither was another stickler for minute punctuation, and his system may be studied in *Britain's Remembrancer*, 1618; owing to his quarrel with the Stationers' Company he could get no printer for this work and was forced to set up the type for himself. The 1625 edition of Bacon's *Essays* is also very heavily punctuated.

## 27. Semicolon with preliminary clauses.

The semicolon is used to mark off a dependent clause at the beginning of a sentence, especially if the comma is used in the im-

## 58 Semicolon with preliminary clauses

mediate context. The only modern equivalent, which would not be suitable in all cases, is the dash.

Say what you can ; my false, ore-weighs your true.

*Measure for Measure*, II. iv. 171.

Suppose we could expell sin by this means; look how much we thus expell of sin, so much we expell of vertue:

Milton, *Areopagitica*, 1644, p. 18.

If we haue lost so many tenths of ours  
To guard a thing not ours, nor worth to vs  
(Had it our name) the valew of one ten ;  
What merit's in that reason which denies  
The yeelding of her vp.

*Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii. 21-5.

*Cam.* Well (my Lord)

If you may please to thinke I loue the King,  
And through him, what's neereſt to him, which is  
Your gracious selfe ; embrace but my direction,  
If your more ponderous and ſetled proiect  
May suffer alteration.

*The Winters Tale*, IV. iii. 533-8.

. . . he that hath her,  
(I meane, that married her, alacke good man,  
And therefore banish'd) is a Creature, such,  
As to seeke through the Regions of the Earth  
For one, his like ; there would be something failing  
In him, that should compare.

*Cymbeline*, I. i. 17-22.

And if we liue, we liue to treade on Kings:  
If dye ; braue death, when Princes dye with vs.

*King Henry the Fourth*, Part I, v. ii. 85-6.

*Semicolon with preliminary clauses* 59

When Vice makes Mercie ; Mercie's fo extended,  
That for the faults loue, is th' offender friended.

*Measure for Measure*, IV. ii. 115-6.

*Cynt.* That then fo anſwer'd (Deareſt *Arete*)  
What th' *Argument*, or of what fort, our Sports  
Are like to be this night ; I not demaund.

Jonſon, *Cynthias Reuels*, v. i. (Qua rto, 1601,  
ſig. K 2 verſo).

But when I would this indigeſted heape  
Reduce (more ſeemely) into ſeuerall ;  
In ſteed of one ; in, *All* together ſtep.

T. Freeman, *Rubbe and A great Caſt*, 1614, ſig. F 4.

. . . Or, your owne end to Juſtifie,  
For having purpoſ'd change, and falſhood ; you  
Can have no way but falſhood to be true ?

Donne, *Poems*, 1633, p. 197.

. . . in the moſt imperfect creatures, and ſuch as  
were not preſerved in the Arke, but having their  
feeds and principles in the wombe of nature, are  
every-where where the power of the Sun is ; in  
theſe is the wiſedome of his hand diſcovered :

Browne, *Religio Medici*, 1643, p. 30.

For they that lack Cuſtomers al the weeke, either  
becauſe their haunte is vnknowne, or the Conſtables  
and Officers of their Pariſhe, watch them ſo narrowly,  
that they dare not queatche ; To celebrate the Sabbath,  
flock to Theaters, and there keepe a generall Market. .

S. Goſſon, *The Schoole of Abufe*, 1579, ſig. C2 verſo.

When *Seneca* hath ſhewed *Serenus* all that he can  
to keepe the minde quiet, and too reſtore it by  
exerciſe if it be idle, or by recreation if it bee weary ;

## 60 *Semicolon with preliminary clauses*

hee giueth him this Caueat in the ende for a parting  
blowe, . . .

S. Gosson, *An Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse*, 1579,  
sig. M verso.

They who to States and Governours of the Commonwealth direct their Speech, High Court of Parliament, or wanting such accessse in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the publick good; I suppose them as at the beginning of no meane endeavour, not a little alter'd and mov'd inwardly in their mindes:

Milton, *Areopagitica*, 1644, p. 1.

It may so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious, and easie for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest Commonwealths through all ages, and occasions have forborne to use it, and falsest seducers, and oppressors of men were the first who tooke it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of Reformation; I am of those who beleewe, it will be a harder alchymy then *Lullius* ever knew, to sublimat any good use out of such an invention.

Ibid., p. 9.

### 28. *Semicolon marking interrupted speech.*

The semicolon serves to mark a sudden pause or a break in the construction.

The course of true loue neuer did runne smoothe:  
But either it was different in bloud;

## Semicolon marking interruptions 61

*Her.* O crosse! too high to be intrald to loue  
[read lowe].

*Lif.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares;

*Her.* O spight! too olde to be ingag'd to young.

*Lif.* Or else, it stood vpon the choyce of friends;

*Her.* O hell, to choose loue by anothers eyes!

*Lys.* Or, if there were a sympathy in choyce, . . .

*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, I. i. 134-41,  
(Fisher's Quarto, 1600, sig. A 4).

*Brut.* No, not an Oath: if not the Face of men,  
The sufferance of our Soules, the times Abuse;  
If there be Motiues weake, breake off betimes,  
And euery man hence, to his idle bed:

*Julius Cæsar*, II. i. 114-7.

(these Petty-brands

That Calumnie doth vse; Oh, I am out,

That Mercy do's, for Calumnie will feare

Vertue it selfe). *The Winters Tale*, II. i. 70-3.

*CET.* Strike him. *LEN.* Hold, good *CAIVS*;

*CET.* Fear'st thou not, *CATO*?

*Jonson, Catiline*, III. (Folio, 1616, p. 711).

If thou bee'st he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd . . .

*Milton, Paradise Lost*, 1667, I. 84 (sig. A 2 verso).

And as for my rising by other mens fall; God shield  
me.

*Eastward Hoe*, I. i. (Quarto, 1605, sig. A 2 verso).

The use is extended to exclamations.

Ah; if thou issuleffe shalt hap to die, *Sonnet ix.*

Ah; Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?

*Milton, Lycidas*, l. 107 (*Poems*, 1673, p. 80).



## 62 Semicolon marking interruptions

*Ref.* Deere *Cellia* ; I show more mirth then I am  
mistresse of, *As you like it*, I. ii. 3-4.

MECÆ. O, good my lord ; forgiue : be like the Gods.  
Jonson, *Poetaster*, IV. vi. (Folio, 1616, p. 324).

PYRG. I, but Master ; take heed how you giue  
this out, *Ibid.*, IV. vii. (p. 325).

Chapman ; *We finde by thy past-prized fraught,  
What wealth thou dost upon this Land conferre ;*  
Drayton, Lines prefixed to *The Georgicks of Hesiod*,  
by George Chapman, 1618.

*Arcite*. . . . . *Palamon* ;  
Thou ha'lt the Start now, thou shalt stay and see  
Her bright eyes breake each morning gainst thy  
window,  
*The Two Noble Kinsmen*, II. 3. (Quarto, 1634,  
sig. E 2 verso).

### 29. The emphasizing semicolon.

The use of the comma in § 7 is similar,  
and in the passage from Barnfield quoted below  
it seems impossible to distinguish them.

Thy Dæmon that thy spirit which keepes thee, is  
Noble, Courageous, high vnmatchable,  
Where *Cæsars* is not. But neere him ; thy Angell  
Becomes a feare : as being o're-pow'rd,  
*Anthony and Cleopatra*, II. iii. 19-22.

*Hel.* To each of you, one faire and vertuous  
Mistris ;  
Fall when loue please, marry to each but one.  
*All's Well, that Ends Well*, II. iii. 63-4.

## *The emphasizing semicolon* 63

*Rich.* Doubly diuorc'd? (bad men) ye violate  
A two-fold Marriage; 'twixt my Crowne, and me,  
And then betwixt me, and my married Wife.

*Richard the Second*, v. i. 71-3.

And I will put that Businesse in your Bosomes,  
Whose execution takes your Enemie off,  
Grapples you to the heart; and loue of vs,

*Macbeth*, III. i. 104-6.

### *Conscience.*

Aye mee (distressed Wight) what shall I doe?  
Where shall I rest? Or whither shall I goe?  
Vnto the rich? (woes mee) they, doe abhor me:  
Vnto the poore? (alas) they, care not for me:  
Vnto the Olde-man? hee; hath mee forgot: 5  
Vnto the Young-man? yet hee, knowes me not:  
Vnto the Prince? hee; can dispence with mee:  
Vnto the Magistrate? that, may not bee:  
Vnto the Court? for it, I am too base:  
Vnto the Countrey? there, I haue no place: 10  
Vnto the Citty? thence; I am exilde:  
Vnto the Village? there; I am reuilde:  
Vnto the Barre? the Lawyer there, is bribed?  
Vnto the Warre? there, *Conscience* is derided:  
Vnto the Temple? there; I am disguised: 15  
Vnto the Market? there, I am despised:  
Thus both the young and olde, the rich and poore,  
Against mee (filly Creature) shut their doore.  
Then, fith each one seekes my rebuke and shame,  
He goe againe to Heauen (from whence I came.) 20

Richard Barnfield, *The Combat, betweene Conscience  
and Couetousnesse*, 1598, sig. D 3 verso.

In this carefully printed passage the note of

## 64 *The emphasizing semicolon*

interrogation after 'bribed' in line 13 is the only error of punctuation.

In the following passages the distinction between the semicolon and the comma is carefully observed; the heavier stopping is almost necessary to give the required emphasis in a run of commas.

Thus, what with the war; what with the fweat,  
what with the gallowes, and what with pouerty, I am  
Custom-shrunke. *Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 88-90.

No ceremony that to great ones longs,  
Not the Kings Crowne; nor the deputed fword,  
The Marshalls Truncheon, nor the Iudges Robe  
Become them with one halfe so good a grace  
As mercie does: *Ibid.*, II. ii. 59-63.

*Apollo* flies, and *Daphne* holds the chafe;  
The Doue pursues the Griffin, the milde Hinde  
Makes speed to catch the Tyger.  
*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, II. i. 231-3.

*Duk.* She is too subtile for thee, and her smoothnes;  
Her verie silence, and per [*read her*] patience,  
Speake to the people, and they pittie her:  
*As you like it*, I. iii. 80-2.

Poore key-cold Figure of a holy King,  
Pale Ashes of the House of Lancafter;  
Thou bloodlesse Remnant of that Royal Blood,  
Be it lawfull that I inuocate thy Ghost, . . .  
*Richard the Third*, I. ii. 5-8.

*Mach.* Then comes my Fit againe:  
I had elfe beene perfect;

## *The emphasizing semicolon* 65

Whole as the Marble, founded as the Rocke,  
As broad, and generall, as the casing Ayre :

*Macbeth*, III. iv. 21-3.

She's wedded,  
Her Husband banish'd; she imprison'd, all  
Is outward sorrow, though I thinke the King  
Be touch'd at very heart. *Cymbeline*, I. i. 7-10.

The Generall's disdain'd  
By him one step below; he, by the next,  
That next, by him beneath :

*Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 129-31.

I speake not this to preferr *Botley* before *Oxford*,  
a cottage of clownes, before a Colledge of Muses;  
*Pans* pipe, before *Apollo's* harp.

S. Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, sig. E 3.

### 30. *The distinction between the semicolon and the colon.*

The following passages show the distinction clearly, though it may not always have been observed rigidly by the printer.

*Suf.* She's beautifull; and therefore to be Wooed :  
She is a Woman; therefore to be Wonne.

*Henry the Sixth*, Part I, v. iii. 78-9.

If thou would haue such a one, take me ? and take  
me; take a Souldier : take a Souldier; take a King.

*Henry the Fifth*, v. ii. 173-5.

*Fleane* is scap'd.

*Macb.* Then comes my Fit againe :  
I had else beene perfect ;

## 66 *The distinction between the*

Whole as the Marble, founded as the Rocke,  
As broad, and generall, as the casing Ayre :  
But now I am cabin'd, crib'd, confin'd, bound in  
To fawcy doubts, and feares.

*Macbeth*, III. iv. 20-5.

As *Cæsar* lou'd mee, I weepe for him; as he was  
Fortunate, I reioyce at it; as he was Valiant, I  
honour him: But, as he was Ambitious, I flew him.

*Julius Cæsar*, III. ii. 26-9.

But soft, me thinkes I fent the Mornings Ayre ;  
Briefe let me be : Sleeping within mine Orchard, . . .

*Hamlet*, I. v. 58-9.

Had I not

Fowre, or fiue women once, that tended me ?

*Prof.* Thou hadst; and more *Miranda* : But how is it  
That this liues in thy minde ?

*The Tempest*, I. ii. 46-9.

Or whether that the body publike, be  
A horse whereon the Gouvernor doth ride,  
Who newly in the Seate, that it may know  
He can command; lets it strait feele the spur :  
Whether the Tirranny be in his place,  
Or in his Eminence that fills it vp  
I stagger in : But this new Gouvernor  
Awakes me all the inrolled penalties  
Which haue (like vn-scowr'd Armor) hung by th' wall  
So long, that nineteene Zodiacks haue gone round,  
And none of them beene worne ; and for a name  
Now puts the drowfie and neglected Act  
Freshly on me : 'tis surely for a name.

*Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 169-81.

*Du.* Too old by heauen : Let still the woman take  
An elder then her selfe, so weares she to him ;  
So fwayes she leuell in her husbands heart :

*Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 29-31.

31. Colon marking an emphatic pause.

It is evident that in all the passages of the previous section the colon is a stronger stop than the semicolon ; indeed it is the function of the colon to mark an emphatic pause. Compare its use in the Prayer Book to point the *Psalms* for singing.

and with him,  
To leaue no Rubs nor Botches in the Worke :  
*Fleane*, his Sonne, that keepes him companie,  
... must embrace the fate  
Of that darke houre : *Macbeth*, III. i. 133-8.

O pardon me, thou bleeding peece of Earth :  
That I am meeke and gentle with these Butchers.  
*Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 254-5.

Note the following instance in which the word preceded by the colon rounds off the retort after a contemptuous pause.

And yet as heauie as my waight should be.

*Pet.* Shold be, should : buzze.

*Kate.* Well tane, and like a buzzard.

*The Taming of the Shrew*, II. i. 206-7.

Only by dwelling on the second 'should' is it

possible to indicate the pun on 'bee' and 'buzz'. This is clearly a hint to the actor.

*Cleo.* By *Ifts*, I will giue thee bloody teeth,  
If thou with *Cæsar* Paragon againe :  
My man of men. *Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. v. 70-2.

Cleopatra pauses to choose her antithesis to 'Cæsar'; this is a stronger form of the comma equivalent to a dash illustrated in § 8.

*Corio.* The God of Souldiers:  
With the consent of fupreame Ioue, informe  
Thy thoughts with Nobleneffe,

*Coriolanus*, v. iii. 70-2.

*Laer.* Thought, and Affliction, Passion, Hell it felfe:  
She turnes to Fauour, and to prettineffe.

*Hamlet*, iv. v. 187-8.

In the following passages the use of the colon is similar, though the sense hardly seems to justify so strong a pause. The check to the rhythm could be given equally well by the emphasizing comma (§ 7).

when fpiight of cormorant deuouring Time,  
Th' endeuour of this present breath may buy :  
That honour which fhall bate his fythes keene edge,  
And make vs heyres of all eternitie.

*Loues Labour's loft*, I. i. 4-7.

If thou furuiue my well contented daie  
When that churle death my bones with duft fhall couer  
And fhalt by fortune once more re-furuay :  
Thefe poore rude lines of thy deceafed Louer :

*Sonnet xxxii.*

That by this feperation I may giue:  
That due to thee which thou deferu'st alone:

*Sonnet xxxix.*

Nor *Mars* his fword, nor warres quick fire fhall burne:  
The liuing record of your memory. *Sonnet lv.*

The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are  
From his low tract and looke an other way:  
So thou, thy felfe out-going in thy noon:  
Vnlok'd on dieft vnleffe thou get a sonne.

*Sonnet vii.*

Oh father, what a hell of witch-craft lies,  
In the small orb of one perticular teare?  
But with the inuention of the eies:  
What rocky heart to water will not weare?

*A Louers Complaint, 1609, sig. L 2.*

As if to call attention to the nature of this  
pause, the Folio sometimes even breaks a line  
in half, giving one blank verse as two.

*King.* Lords, giue vs leaue:  
The Prince of Wales, and I,  
Must haue some priuate conference:

*King Henry the Fourth, Part I, III. ii. 1-2.*

*Peter.* Come I haue found you out a stand most fit,  
Where you may haue such vantage on the *Duke*,  
He shall not passe you:  
Twice haue the Trumpets founded.  
The generous, and grauest Citizens  
Haue hent the gates, and very neere vpon  
The *Duke* is entring:  
Therefore hence away.

*Measure for Measure, IV. vi. 10-15.*



*Lear.* Do's any heere know me?  
 This is not *Lear*:  
 Do's *Lear* walke thus? Speake thus? Where are his  
 eies? *King Lear*, I. iv. 248-9.

*Alb.* What's the matter, Sir?  
*Lear.* Ile tell thee:  
 Life and death, I am asham'd  
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,  
 Ibid., 319-21.

*Pol.* He will come straight:  
 Looke you lay home to him,  
 Tell him his pranks haue been too broad to beare  
 with, *Hamlet*, III. iv. 1-2.

*Tullus Aufdious*, is he within your Walles?  
 1. *Senat.* No, nor a man that feares you lesse then  
 he,  
 That's leffer then a little: *Drum a farre off.*  
 Hearke, our Drummes  
 Are bringing forth our youth: *Coriolanus*, I. iv. 13-16.

The use is extended to dependent clauses  
 which precede the main clause.

Through this, the wel-beloued *Brutus* stabb'd,  
 And as he pluck'd his curfed Steele away:  
 Marke how the blood of *Cæsar* followed it,  
*Julius Cæsar*, III. ii. 181-3.

*Shep.* Fy (daughter) when my old wife liu'd: vpon  
 This day, she was both Pantler, Butler, Cooke,  
 Both Dame and Seruant: Welcom'd all: seru'd all,  
*The Winters Tale*, IV. iii. 55-7.

But now I am return'd, and that warre-thoughts  
 Haue left their places vacant: in their roomes,

Come thronging soft and delicate desires,  
All prompting mee how faire yong *Hero* is,  
*Much ado about Nothing*, I. i. 311-4.

*Ben.* Two of them haue the verie bent of honor,  
And if their wisedomes be mislaid in this:  
The practise of it liues in *John* the bastard,  
Whose spirits toile in frame of villanies.  
*Ibid.*, IV. i. 188-91.

The golden balles of heauens eternal fire,  
That danc'd with glorie on the siluer waues:  
Now wants the fewell that enflamde his beames . . .  
*Marlowe, Tamburlaine*, Part II, II. iii.  
(Octavo, 1590, sig. G 4).

32. *Colon marking an interrupted speech.*

The most obvious cases are those in which the speech ends with a colon. The interruption is followed by a well-defined pause. In the first instance quoted *Olivia* appeals to *Viola* to continue her speech, and *Viola* answers that her lips are closed.

*Cesario*, you do not keepe promise with me.  
*Vio.* Madam:  
*Du.* Gracious *Olivia*.  
*Ol.* What do you say *Cesario*? Good my Lord.  
*Vio.* My Lord would speake, my dutie hushes me.  
*Twelfth Night*, V. i. 107-11.

*Clau.* Is there no remedie?  
*Isa.* None, but such remedie, as to saue a head

To cleave a heart in twaine :

*Clau.* But is there anie ?

*Measure for Measure*, III. i. 59-61.

... and bend

The Dukedom yet vnbow'd (alas poore *Millaine*)

To most ignoble stooping.

*Mira.* Oh the heauens :

*Prof.* Marke his condition, and th'euent, then tell me

If this might be a brother. *The Tempest*, I. ii. 114-8.

... you made choyce of him,

To be Commander ouer powers in *France*,

But he :

*King.* Good *Lincolne*, prethee pause a while,  
Euen in thine eyes I read what thou wouldst speake,

Dekker, *The Shoo-makers Holy-day*, 1631, sig. H 4.

Pos. No, that tricke

Was well put home, and had succeeded too;

But that *SABINVS* cought a caution out ;

For she began to swell : *SEL.* And may she burst.

Jonson, *Seianus*, II (Folio, 1616, p. 381).

The broken utterance may be resumed with a new turn of expression when the speaker has been completely overpowered by the emotion of the moment or has deliberately left the words half-spoken to convey a hint or a warning. The colon marks the interval of silence.

... making so bold;

(My feares forgetting manners) to vnseale

Their grand Commillion, where I found *Horatio*,

Oh royall Knauery : An exact command, ...

That on the superuize . . .

My head shoud be struck off. *Hamlet*, v. ii. 16-25.

. . . this is not, no,

Layd to thy answere: but the last: O Lords,  
When I haue said, cry woe: the Queene, the Queene,  
The sweet'ft, deer't creature's dead:

*The Winters Tale*, III. ii. 199-202.

*Perd.* No, like a banke, for Loue to lye, and play  
on:

Not like a Coarse: or if: not to be buried,  
But quicke, and in mine armes. *Ibid.*, iv. iii. 130-2.

*Val.* Please you, Ile write your Ladiship another.

*Sil.* And when it's writ: for my sake read it ouer,  
And if it please you, so: if not: why so:

*Val.* If it please me, (Madam?) what then?

*The two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. i. 139-42.

*Val.* No more: vnles the next word that thou  
speak'ft

Haue some malignant power vpon my life:

If so: I pray thee breath it in mine eare,

As ending Antheme of my endlesse dolor.

*Ibid.*, III. i. 238-41.

. . . and 'twas I

That the mad *Brutus* ended: he alone

Dealt on Lieutenantry, and no practife had

In the braue squares of Warre: yet now: no matter.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, III. ix. 37-40.

Now shall he:

I know not what he shall, God fend him well,

*All's Well, that Ends Well*, I. i. 191-2.

*Iach.* Vpon a time, vnhappy was the clocke

That strooke the houre: it was in Rome, accurst

## 74 *Colon marking interrupted speech*

The Mansion where: 'twas at a Feast, oh would  
Our Viands had bin poyson'd (or at least  
Those which I heau'd to head:)

*Cymbeline*, v. v. 154-8.

Gentlemen all: Alas, what shall I say,  
My credit now stands on such slippery ground,  
*Julius Caesar*, III. i. 190-1.

*Suf.* Oh wert thou for my felfe: but *Suffolke* stay,  
Thou mayest not wander in that Labyrinth,  
*Henry the Sixt*, Part I, v. iii. 186-7.

*King Ri.* Giue me another horfe, bind vp my  
wounds,  
Haue mercie Iesu: soft, I did but dreame.

*Richard the Third*, Quarto, 1597, v. iii. 178-9.

*Pir.* O wherefore Nature, did'st thou Lions frame?  
Since Lion vilde hath heere deflour'd my deere:  
Which is: no, no, which was the fairest Dame  
That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik'd, that look'd with  
cheere.

*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, v. i. 298-301.

the old man ouercome,  
Kist him, imbraht him, and vnloofde his bands,  
And then: O *Dido*, pardon me.

*Dido.* Nay, leaue not here; resolute me of the rest.  
Marlowe and Nashe, *The Tragedie of Dido*, II. i.  
(Quarto, 1594, sig. B 4 verso).

### 33. *Antithetic colon.*

The colon is used where two or more clauses  
are evenly balanced in thought or expression.

When I defir'd him to come home to dinner,  
He ask'd me for a hundred markes in gold :  
'Tis dinner time, quoth I : my gold, quoth he :  
Your meat doth burne, quoth I : my gold quoth he :  
Will you come, quoth I : my gold, quoth he ;  
Where is the thousand markes I gaue thee villaine ?  
The Pigge quoth I, is burn'd : my gold, quoth he :  
My mistresse, fir, quoth I : hang vp thy Mistresse :  
I know not thy mistresse, out on thy mistresse.

*The Comedie of Errors*, II. i. 60-8.

*Prin.* Ile tell thee how *Beatrice* prais'd thy wit  
the other day : I said thou hadst a fine wit : true  
saies she, a fine little one : no said I, a great wit :  
right saies shee, a great grosse one : nay said I, a good  
wit : iust said she, it hurts no body : nay said I, the  
gentleman is wise : certain said she, a wise gentleman :  
nay said I, he hath the tongues : that I beleue said  
shee, for hee swore a thing to me on munday night,  
which he forswore on tuesday morning : there's a  
double tongue, there's two tongues : thus did shee an  
howre together transshape thy particular vertues,...

*Much adoe about Nothing*, v. i. 164-76.

*Val.* No (Madam) so it steed you, I will write  
(Please you command) a thousand times as much :  
And yet —

*Sil.* A pretty period : well : I ghesse the sequell ;  
And yet I will not name it : and yet I care not.  
And yet, take this againe : and yet I thanke you :  
Meaning henceforth to trouble you no more.

*Speed.* And yet you will : and yet, another yet.

*The two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. i. 124-31.

Nor haue we one or two kinde of drunkards  
onely, but eight kinds. The first is Ape drunke,

and he leapes, and fings, and hollowes, and daunceth for the heauens: the second is Lion drunke, and he flings the pots about the houle, calls his Hostesse whore, breakes the glasse windowes with his dagger, and is apt to quarrell with any man that speaks to him: the third is Swine drunke, heauy, lumpish, and sleepe, and cries for a little more drinke, and a few more cloathes: the fourth is Sheepe drunke, wife in his own conceipt, when he cannot bring foorth a right word: the fifth is Mawdlen drunke when a fellowe will weepe for kindnes in the midst of his Ale, and kisse you, saying; By God, Captaine, I loue thee; goe thy waies, thou dost not thinke so often of me as I do of thee, I would (if it pleased GOD) I could not loue thee so well as I doo; and then he puts his finger in his eie, and cries: the sixt is Martin drunke, when a man is drunke, and drinkes himselfe sober ere he stirre: the seuenth is Goate drunke, when, in his drunkennes, he hath no minde but on Lechery: the eighth is Foxe drunke, when he is craftie drunke, as many of the Dutch men bee, that will neuer bargain but when they are drunke.

Nashe, *Pierce Penileffe*, 1592, sig. F 1 (*Works*, ed. McKerrow, I, pp. 207-8).

The antithesis may take the subtler form of an afterthought; the sentence is resumed with qualification or correction.

But in one night,  
A Storme, or Robbery (call it what you will)  
Shooke downe my mellow hangings: nay my Leaues,  
And left me bare to weather. *Cymbeline*, III. iii. 61-4.

*Isab.* 'Saue your Honour. (*Exit.*)

*Ang.* From thee: euen from thy vertue.

*Measure for Measure*, II. ii. 161.

*Ang.* And she will speake most bitterly, and strange.

*Isab.* Most strange: but yet most truely will I  
speake, Ibid., v. i. 36-7.

Thy slander hath gone through and through her  
heart,

And she lies buried with her ancestors:

O in a tombe where neuer scandall slept,

Saue this of hers, fram'd by thy villanie.

*Much adoe about Nothing*, v. i. 68-71.

Or if thou thinkest I am too quickly wonne,

Ile frowne and be peruerse, and say thee nay,

So thou wilt wooe: But else not for the world.

*Romeo and Iuliet*, II. ii. 95-7.

•

34. *Colon introducing reported speech, &c.*

Shall I bend low, and in a bond-mans key . . .

Say this: Faire fir, you spt on me on Wednesday  
last; *The Merchant of Venice*, I. iii. 124-7.

*Mountioy.* Thus sayes my King: Say thou to  
*Harry* of England, Though we seem'd dead, . . .

*Henry the Fifth*, III. vi. 128-9.

And with a feeble gripe, sayes: Deere my Lord,

Commend my seruice to my Soueraigne,

Ibid., IV. vi. 22-3.

Crowne him, and say: Long liue our Emperour.

*Titus Andronicus*, I. i. 229.



## 78 Colon introducing reported speech

*Men.* There was a time, when all the bodies members  
Rebell'd against the Belly; thus accus'd it:  
That onely like a Gulfe it did remaine  
I'th midd'lt a th'body, idle and vnactiue,  
Still cubbording the Viand, *Coriolanus*, I. i. 101-5.

Further obserue in this speech of *Herod* to the  
Wife men: that he also would go to worship the babe:  
that some man may speake that in hypocrisie to the  
damnation of his owne soule, which another beleeuing  
in simplicitie may heare with comfort.

E. Philips, *Certaine godly and learned Sermons*,  
1605, p. 51.

In the above instance the first colon introduces *Herod's* speech, the second introduces the noun clause dependent on the main verb 'obserue'. The latter use will explain similar cases which a reader unfamiliar with old usage would hastily assume to be misprints of the worst kind.

*Mece.* If it might please you, to enforce no further  
The griefes betweene ye: to forget them quite,  
Were to remember: that the present neede,  
Speakes to attone you.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, II. ii. 103-6.

*Ag.* Speake Prince of *Ithaca*, and be't of lesse  
expect:

That matter needlesse of importlesse burthen  
Diuide thy lips; then we are confident  
When ranke *Thersites* opes his Masticke iawes,  
We shall heare Musicke, Wit, and Oracle.

*Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 70-4.

35. *The full stop in an incomplete sentence.*

The colon and semicolon served for heavier stopping in a run of commas; and on the same principle, if these had been already employed and it was necessary to mark a stronger pause, a full stop could be used even for an unfinished sentence. In such cases the sense was a sufficient guide.

*Prof.* To haue no Schreene between this part he  
plaid,  
And him he plaid it for, he needes will be  
Absolute *Millaine*, Me (poor man) my Librarie  
Was Dukedome large enough: of temporall roalties  
[*read roalties*]  
He thinks me now incapable. Confederates  
(fo drie he was for Sway) with King of *Naples*  
To giue him Annuall tribute,

*The Tempest*, I. ii. 107-13.

Thy husband is thy Lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy foueraigne: One that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance. Commits his body  
To painfull labour, both by sea and land:

*The Taming of the Shrew*, v. ii. 147-50.

*Ham.* Such an Act  
That blurres the grace and blush of Modestie,  
Cals Vertue Hypocrite, takes off the Rose  
From the faire forehead of an innocent loue,  
And makes a blister there. Makes marriage voves  
As false as Dicers Oathes. Oh such a deed,

As from the body of Contraction pluckes  
 The very foule, and sweete Religion makes  
 A rapfodie of words. *Hamlet*, III. iv. 40-8.

Swear Priests and Cowards, and men Cautelous  
 Old feeble Carrions, and fuch suffering Soules  
 That welcome wrongs: Vnto bad caufes, fweare  
 Such Creatures as men doubt; but do not ftaine  
 The euen vertue of our Enterprize,  
 Nor th'infuppreffiuue Mettle of our Spirits,  
 To thinke, that or our Caufe, or our Performance  
 Did neede an Oath. When euery drop of blood  
 That euery Roman beares, and Nobly beares  
 Is guilty of a feuerall Bastardie,  
 If he do breake the finalleft Particle  
 Of any promife that hath paff from him.'

*Julius Cæfar*, II. i. 129-40.

*Poft.* I embrace thefe Conditions, let vs haue  
 Articles betwixt vs: onely thus farre you fhall  
 anfwere, if you make your voyage vpon her, and  
 giue me directly to vnderftand, you haue preuayl'd,  
 I am no further your Enemy, fhee is not worth our  
 debate. If fhee remaine vnfeduc'd, you not making  
 it appeare otherwife: for your ill opinion, and th'  
 affault you haue made to her chaftity, you fhall  
 answer me with your Sword.

*Cymbeline*, I. iv. 174-83.

As I haue two Prentifes: the one of a boundlefse  
 prodigalitie, the other of a moft hopefull Induftrie. So  
 haue I onely two daughters: the eldeft, of a proud  
 ambition and nice wantonneffe; the other of a modeft  
 humilitie and comely foberneffe.

*Eastward Hoe*, I. i. (Quarto, 1605, sig. A 3).

And, for your spectators, you behold them, what they are: The most choice particulars in *court*: This tels tales well; This prouides coaches; This repeates iests; This presents gifts; This holds vp the arras; This takes downe from horse; This protests by this light; This sweares by that candle; This delighteth; This adoreth. Yet, all but three men.

Jonson, *Cynthias Reuells*, v. iv. (Folio, 1616,  
p. 241).

*Bero.* Come on then, I will sweare to studie so,  
To know the thing I am forbid to know:  
As thus, to study where I well may dine,  
When I to fast expressely am forbid.  
Or studie where to meet some Mistresse fine,  
When Mistresses from common sense are hid.  
Or hauing sworne too hard a keeping oath,  
Studie to breake it, and not breake my troth.

*Loues Labour's lost*, i. i. 59-66.

The third requisite in our *Poet*, or *Maker*, is *Imitation*, to bee able to convert the substance, or Riches of an other *Poet*, to his owne use. To make choise of one excellent man above the rest, and so to follow him, till he grow very *Hee*: or, so like him, as the Copie may be mistaken for the Principall. Not, as a Creature, that swallowes, what it takes in, crude, raw, or indigested; but, that feedes with an Appetite, and hath a Stomacke to concoct, deuide, and turrie all into nourishment.

Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, Folio, 1640, p. 127.

When I consider euery thing that growes  
Holds in perfection but a little moment. [*read*:]  
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shoves  
Whereon the Stars in secret influence comment.

When I perceiue that men as plants increafe,  
 Cheared and checkt euen by the selfe-same fkie :  
 Vaunt in their youthfull sap, at height decrease,  
 And were their braue state out of memory.  
 Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,  
 Sets you most rich in youth before my sight, . . .

*Sonnet xv.*

*Macb.* If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere  
 well,  
 It were done quickly : If th' Affassination  
 Could trammell vp the Consequence, and catch  
 With his surcease, Successe : that but this blow  
 Might be the be all, and the end all. Heere,  
 But heere, vpon this Banke and Schoole of time,  
 Wee'd iumpe the life to come. But in these Cafes,  
 We still haue iudgement heere, . . .

*Macbeth*, I. vii. 1-8.

Read these lines as they are pointed in the Folio, and the period after 'end all' arrests attention. Hanmer was the first to empty the passage of all its metrical power by printing 'the be-all and the end-all here,' but the meaning as well as the movement of the verse suggest the close connexion of the words 'Heere, But heere'. The pause is the most powerful of which blank verse is capable. At that final monosyllable the rhythm gathers like a wave, plunges over to the line beyond, and falls in all its weight and force on the repeated word. The check given to the line fits in admirably with the brooding, hesi-

tating mood of the speaker, and even the slighter pause indicated by the comma after 'be all' has value: it emphasizes, faintly perhaps, but unmistakably, 'the end all', and so helps the climax of the period. In no other way could this particular rhythm have been suggested in print: for its full realization we must go to the actor. Modern punctuation seems weak in comparison, but at least we can print as Rowe did,

the be-all and the end-all—here,  
But here, . . .

With the punctuation of the speech as a whole compare the famous lines of Marlowe:

If all the pens that euer poets held,  
Had fed the feeling of their maisters thoughts,  
And euery sweetnes that inspir'd their harts,  
Their minds, and muses on admyred theames:  
If all the heavenly Quintessence they still  
From their immortall flowers of Poesy,  
Wherein as in a myrrour we perceiue  
The highest reaches of a humaine wit.  
If these had made one Poems period  
And all combin'd in Beauties worthinesse,  
Yet should ther houer in their restlesse heads,  
One thought, one grace, one woonder at the least,  
Which into words no vertue can digest:

*Tamburlaine*, Part I, v. ii. (Octavo, 1590, sig. E).

36. *Full stop ending an interrupted speech.*

The commonest of the various forms of punctuation adopted in this case. This is really a sub-division of the preceding section, and it is interesting as proving that old printers found no incongruity in closing an unfinished period with this stop.

*Mach.* Tell me, thou vnknowne power.

I He knowes thy thought :

Heare his speech, but say thou nought.

*Macbeth*, IV. i. 69-70.

*Gon.* Had I plantation of this Isle my Lord.

*Ant.* Hee'd sow't with Nettle-feed.

*The Tempest*, II. i. 150-1.

*Ant.* Now by Sword.

*Cleo.* And Target.

*Anthony and Cleopatra*, I. iii. 82.

*Mef.* But yet Madam.

*Cleo.* I do not like but yet, . . .

*Ibid.*, II. v. 49-50.

The course of true loue neuer did run smooth,

But either it was different in blood.

*Her.* O crosse ! too high to be enthral'd to loe.

*Lys.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares.

*Her.* O spight ! too old to be ingag'd to yong.

*Lys.* Or else it stood vpon the choise of merit.

*Her.* O hell ! to choose loue by anothers eie.

*Lys.* Or if there were a simparchie in choise,

Warre, death, or sicknesse, did lay siege to it ;

*A Midsummer nights Dreame*, I. i. 134-42.

37. *The use of ‘?’ in exclamations.*

Side by side with the modern note of exclamation the original question-mark was retained in sentences purely exclamatory.

*Ol.* O what a deale of sorne, lookes beautifull?  
*Twelke Night*, III. i. 159.

O what a beast was I to chide him?  
*Romeo and Iuliet*, III. ii. 95.

What traff is Rome?  
What Rubbish, and what Offall?  
*Julius Cæsar*, I. iii. 108-9.

Oh what a Rogue and Pefant flauie am I?  
*Hamlet*, II. ii. 584.

How like a Winter hath my absence beene  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting yeare?  
What freezings haue I felt, what darke daies seene?  
What old Decembers barenesse every where?  
*Sonnet xcvi.*

*Quick.* Accur'ft that euer I was fau'd, or borne.  
How fatall is my sad ariuall here?  
*Eastward Hoe*, IV. i. (Quarto, 1605, sig. F 3 verso).

CAMDEN, most reuerend head, to whom I owe  
All that I am in arts, all that I know.  
(How nothing's that?)  
Jonson, *Epigram* xiv (Folio, 1616, p. 772).

Ah, what a trifle is a heart,  
If once into loves hands it come?  
*Donne, Poems*, 1633, p. 192.



86 *The use of ‘?’ in exclamations*

With words like 'what' and 'how' the use of '?'—though superseded for obvious reasons of convenience by '!'—ought to be accepted. Irregular survivals of the earlier usage, such as the following, are perhaps questionable after the use of '!' was established.

*Mal.* Ile be reueng'd on the whole packe of you?  
*Twelfth Night*, v. i. 390.

### 38. *The metrical hyphen.*

Yet shallow great-men, they must wife-men seeme . . .

J. Stephens, *Cinthias Reuenge*, 1613, sig. C 2.

This use of the hyphen would hardly be expected in prose, but there is a striking instance in Ben Jonson's dedication of *Volpone*:

*He that is said to be able to informe yong-men to all good disciplines, inflame growne-men to all great vertues, keepe old-men in their best and supreme state, . . .*

Folio, 1616, pp. 442-3.

The punctuation of this is explained in the rules Jonson lays down for accents in his *English Grammar*, where he says that words like 'sociable', 'tolerable', are accented on the first syllable and keep the accent in their compounds 'insociable', 'intolerable':

But in the way of comparison, it altereth thus: Some then are *sociable*, some *insociable*; some *tolerable*, some *intolerable*. For, the *Accent* fits on the *Syllabe* that puts difference: as

*Sincerity. insincerity.*

Folio, 1640, p. 55.

He therefore accented the first syllable of the contrasted words, 'yong-men', 'growne-men', 'old-men', and a modernized text which faithfully reproduced this detail would have to print '*young men*', '*grown men*', '*old men*'.

### 39. *Brackets.*

In old printing the use of brackets was much commoner, but they are always in their

nature parenthetic; that is to say, they mark off words, phrases, or clauses which interrupt the direct grammatical construction.

i. The simplest instances of the use are the vocative case, exclamations, or interpolated phrases like 'quoth he'.

*Pro.* You do looke (my fon) in a mou'd fort,  
*The Tempest*, IV. i. 146.

. . . fhrug'ft thou (Malice) *Ibid.*, I. ii. 367.

O that we then could come by *Cæsars* Spirit,  
And not difmember *Cæsar*! But (alas)  
*Cæsar* muft bleed for it. *Julius Cæsar*, II. i. 169-71.

*Quick.* I for footh: (*vmp.*)

*Touch.* How now fir? the druncken hyckop, fo  
foone this morning?

*Eastward Hoe*, II. i. (Quarto, 1605, sig. B 2 verso).

P. SE. Rogues, Rafcalls (\*baw waw) FIT. He calls  
his dogs to his ayd.

Jonson, *The Staple of Newes*, v. v. (Folio, 1640,  
p. 73).

In this case the Folio has a marginal note,  
'\*His dogges barke.'

The foolifh things of the world (saith *Paule*) God  
chufeth,

Nashe, *Christs Teares ouer Ierusalem*, 1593  
(*Works*, ed. McKerrow, II, 84).

O noble Prince (then all the Hoaft reply'd)  
March-on a Gods Name;

Sylvester, *Du Bartas*, 1641, p. 180.

O if (I say) you looke vpon this verse,  
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,  
*Sonnet lxxi.*

*Cel.* By our beards (if we had them) thou art.  
*Clo.* By my knauerie (if I had it) then I were :  
*As you like it*, I. ii. 80-2.

*Brag.* I doe affect the very ground (which is  
bafe) where her shooe (which is baser) guided by  
her foote (which is basest) doth tread.  
*Loues Labour's lost*, I. ii. 175-7.

ii. Phrases in grammatical apposition.

*Hor.* Two nights together, had these Gentlemen  
(*Marcellus* and *Barnardo*) on their Watch . . .  
Beene thus encountred. *Hamlet*, I. ii. 196-9.

O, these flawes and flarts  
(Imposters to true feare) would well become  
A womans story, *Macbeth*, III. iv. 63-5

. . . free  
From feruile flatterie (common *Poets* flame)  
Jonson, *Epigram* xliii. (Folio, 1616, p. 780).

We are the Huisher to a Morrise,  
(A kind of Masque) whereof good store is . . .  
Jonson, *Entertainment at Althrope* (ibid., p. 877).

iii. A qualifying expression or an after-  
thought.

. . . our ayme, which was  
To take in many Townes, ere (almost) Rome  
Should know we were a-foot.  
*Coriolanus*, I. ii. 23-5.

That (almost) might'ft haue coyn'd me into Golde,  
*Henry the Fifth*, II. ii. 98

How pregnant (fometimes) his Replies are?  
*Hamlet*, I. ii. 216.

But fo little of this true difcontent is there in *London*,  
 that (almost) there is no content in it, but in robbing  
 and prouoking God.

Nashe, *Christs Teares ouer Ierusalem*, 1593  
 (*Works*, ed. McKerrow, II, p. 131).

Thus haue they euasions for all obiections, and are  
 neuer (lightly) brought in question, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

The house (or rather the hell) where these two  
 Earth-wormes encaptiued this beautifull Substaunce, . . .  
 Nashe, *Pierce Pennileffe*, 1592 (*ibid.*, I, p. 167).

Who, though she haue a better verser got,  
 (Or *Poet*, in the court account) then I,  
 Jonson, *The Forreft*, xii. (Folio, 1616, p. 834).

In this instance the brackets serve to point the innuendo. Jonson is girding at Samuel Daniel, and he has made what use he could of the devices of typography by subordinating court poets in a parenthesis and printing 'verser' with a small *v*, while italicizing and capitalizing '*Poet*'.

Sometimes this pointing arrests attention, and is virtually a form of emphasis. In the three instances which follow, the first has a mournful beauty of its own.

Whom I most hated Liuing, thou hast made mee  
With thy Religious Truth, and Modestie,  
(Now in his Armes) Honor: Peace be with him.

*King Henry the Eighth*, iv. ii. 73-5.

And I beseech you come againe to morrow.  
What shall you aske of me that Ile deny,  
That honour (sa'd) may vpon asking giue.

*Twelfth Night*, iii. iv. 233-5.

*Speed*. Is she not hard-fauour'd, sir?

*Val*. Not so faire (boy) as well fauour'd.

*Speed*. Sir, I know that well enough.

*Val*. What dost thou know?

*Speed*. That shee is not so faire, as (of you) well-fauour'd? *The two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. i. 55-60.

iv. Brackets were useful in making a construction clear to the eye. They were frequently employed with adjectives or adjective phrases which follow a noun.

The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are  
From his low tract . . .

*Sonnet vii.*

The Ocean (ouer-peering of his Lift)  
Eates not the Flats with more impittious haste . . .

*Hamlet*, iv. v. 99-100.

Violets (dim,  
But sweeter then the lids of *Iuno's* eyes,  
Or *Cytherea's* breath) pale Prim-roses,

*The Winters Tale*, iv. iii. 120-2.

By a striking development of this usage brackets are employed to avoid grammatical

ambiguity; no clearer evidence could be cited of care on the part of the printer.

Yet god *Achilles* still cries excellent,  
'Tis *Nestor* right. Now play him (me) *Patroclus*,  
Arming to answer in a night-Alarme,  
*Troilus and Cressida*, 1. iii. 169-71.

Here the bracket conveniently shuts off the ethic dative in a separate compartment in order to leave the construction of the direct object clear.

. . . you may as well  
Forbid the Sea for to obey the Moone,  
As (or by Oath) remove, or (Counsaile) shake  
The Fabrick of his Folly,  
*The Winters Tale*, 1. ii. 426-9.

she shall be such  
As (walk'd your first *Queenes Ghost*) it should take ioy  
To see her in your armes. *Ibid.*, v. i. 79-81.

Two passages in the *Sonnets* should be noted for a similar attempt of the printer to secure precision.

Then can I drowne an eye (vn-vf'd to flow)  
For precious friends hid in deaths dateles night,  
*Sonnet xxx.*

But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)  
The humble as the proudest faile doth beare,  
My sawfie barke (inferior farre to his)  
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.  
*Sonnet lxxx.*

The punctuation of such passages as these has an important bearing on the famous lines in *Sonnet xxix*,

Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my state,  
(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising)  
From fullen earth sings himns at Heauens gate,

What right has an editor to alter this to

(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising  
From fullen earth)?

The poet is 'in disgrace with Fortune and mens eyes'; he 'all alone beweepest' his 'out-cast state', and 'troubles deafe heauen' with his 'bootlesse cries'; he curses his fate and 'almost despises' himself when he looks round on the happier lot or greater gifts of others. It breaks a subtle link with the thought of the opening lines and impoverishes the beauty of the simile to detach his 'state' from the 'fullen earth'.

v. Compound nouns or adjectives are enclosed within brackets where we should employ the hyphen if we used any punctuation at all.

Was it the proud full faile of his great verfe,  
Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,  
*Sonnet lxxxvi.*

. . . such (more then impudent) sawcines . . .  
*King Henry the Fourth, Part II, II. i. 127.*



In ranke, and (not to be endur'd) riots Sir.

*King Lear*, I. iv. 226.

If you'l bestow a fmall (of what you haue little)

Patience awhile; *Coriolanus*, I. i. 131-2.

How now (my as faire as Noble) Ladies, . . .

*Ibid.*, II. i. 109.

Good (sometime Queene) prepare thee hence for  
France: *Richard the Second*, v. i. 37.

*Flo.* How *Camillo*

May this (almost a miracle) be done?

*The Winters Tale*, IV. iii. 546-7.

To enquire newes, or what she else can heare

From the Numidians or remoat estates .

Of (the oft-shifting place) the *Sanzonats*.

Heywood, *Pleasant Dialogues*, 1637, sig. D 8

(ed. Bang, ll. 1819-21).

In this last instance the use of the hyphen in  
'oft-shifting' makes any other form of punc-  
tuation than the bracket impossible.

*Momf.* What owe I thee?

*Vitler.* Some (7 marks) an't like ye.

Day, *The Blind-Beggar of Bednal-Green*, 1659,  
sig. B 3 (ed. Bang, ll. 148-9).

vi. The principle of grouping words inside  
a pair of brackets admits of extension, and  
one common form of it is to mark off a  
quotation. Even a single word may be so  
pointed.

MACL. I thanke you, sir:  
And yet the muffled *fates* (had it pleas'd them)

Might haue suppli'd me, from their owne full store,  
Without this word (I thanke you) to a foole.

Jonson, *Euery Man out of his Humour*, II. iv.  
(Folio, 1616, p. 111).

*La.* And thereof comes the prouerbe: (*Blessing of  
your heart, you brew good Ale.*)

*Sp.* Item, she can fowe.

*La.* That's as much as to say (*Can she so?*)

*The two Gentlemen of Verona*, III. i. 308-12.

Similarly when Sir Hugh Evans is catechizing  
William with Lilly's *Latin Grammar* open  
before him:

*Eua.* . . . What is (*Faire*) *William*?

*Will.* *Pulcher.* . . .

*Eua.* . . . What is (*Lapis*) *William*?

*Will.* A Stone.

*The Merry Wiues*, IV. i. 27-9, 33-4.

The title of a book may be so given:

*Lucian*, who in his (*Encomium Demosthenis*) affirms, ..

Jonson, *Cynthias Reuels*, Quarto, 1601, sig. C verso.

vii. Interruptions of a speech and stage-  
asides are sometimes enclosed in brackets.  
Jonson often employs this device, but it is  
found elsewhere. For instance, when King  
Ferdinand reads Armado's letter about Cos-  
tard—'the Clowne', as he is called in the  
Folio—in his presence:

*There did I see that low spirited Swaine, that base  
Minow of thy myrth, (Clown. Mee?) that vbletered*

*small knowing soule, (Clow Me?) that shallow vassall  
(Clow. Still mee?) which as I remember, hight Costard,  
(Clow. O me) . . .*

*Loues Labour's lost, I. i. 248-57.*

In the following passage asides are indicated, though modern editors usually ignore this interesting touch. Brabantio, entering 'with Seruants and Torches', has just made sure that Desdemona has left his house.

*Bra.* It is too true an euill. Gone she is,  
And what's to come of my despised time,  
Is naught but bitterneffe. Now *Rodorigo*,  
Where didst thou see her? (Oh vnhappye Girle).  
With the Moore saidst thou? (Who would be a Father?)  
How didst thou know 'twas she? (Oh she deceaues me  
Past thought :) what said she to you? Get moe Tapers:  
Raife all my Kindred. Are they married thinke you?  
*Othello, I. i. 161-8.*

In Jonson's *Seianus* the muttered comments of Arruntius at the trial of Silius are consistently punctuated in this way: for instance, the asides on Tiberius' dissimulation in offering to yield up his power to the Senate.—

But, if the *Senate* still command me serue,  
I must be glad to practife my obedience.  
(ARR. You must, and will, sir. We doe know it.)  
SEN. CAESAR.  
*Liue long, and happy, great, and royall CAESAR  
The gods preferue thee, and thy modestie,  
Thy wisedome, and thy innocence.* (ARR. Where is't?

The prayer's made before the subiect.) SEN. *Guard*  
*His meeknesse, love, his pietie, his care, . . .*

Folio, 1616, p. 389.

In the *Epithalamion* on the marriage of Hierome Weston with Lady Frances Stuart Jonson thus indicates in a vivid aside that Charles I gave away the bride:

See, now the Chappell opens; where the King

And Bishop stay, to consummate the Rites:

The holy Prelate prays, then takes the Ring,

Afkes first, Who gives her (I *Charles*) then he  
 plights

One in the others hand, . . .

*The Vnder-wood*, Folio, 1640, p. 242.

viii. Jonson with a touch of pedantry extends the bracket to mark what is logically, but not grammatically, the main clause or a strict continuation of the original construction.

Such is our chastitie: which safely fcornes

(Not *Loue*, for who more feruently doth loue

Immortall honour, and diuine renowne?

But) giddie CVPID, VENVS franticke sonne.

*Cynthias Reuels*, v. vi. (Folio, 1616, p. 256).

FAC. . . . And then, a good old woman —

DRV. (Yes faith, thee dwells in *Sea-coale-lane*) did  
 cure me, . . . *The Alchemist*, III. iv. (ibid., p. 645).

What (great, I will not say, but) fodayne cheare  
 Didst thou, then, make 'hem!

*The Forrest*, ii. (ibid., p. 821).

40. *Brackets within brackets.*

This clumsy device is used occasionally, not only in a long parenthesis, where there might be some excuse for it, but even within the compass of a single line.

. . . thou hauing made me Busineffes, (which none (without thee) can sufficiently manage) must either stay to execute them thy selfe, . . .

*The Winters Tale*, IV. i. 15-17.

*Lacie*. My Lord, I will (for honor (not desire Of land or liuings) or to be your heire) So guide my actions . . .

Dekker, *The Shoemakers Holiday*, I. i. (Quarto, 1600, sig. B 2 verso).

He gets it not by Fortune (she is fight-lesse):  
Neither by force (for, who so enters (Right-lesse)  
By Force, is forced to go out with shame):

Sylvester, *Du Bartas*, 1641, p. 179.

41. *Absence of punctuation to mark an interruption.*

*Luc*. Behold, behold, where Madam *Mitigation* comes.

I haue purchas'd as many diseases vnder her Roofe,  
As come to

2. *Gent*. To what I pray?

*Measure for Measure*, I. ii. 47-50.

*Mar*. I would *Frier Peter*

*Isab*. Oh peace, the *Frier* is come.

*Ibid.*, IV. vi. 9.

*Gon.* Well, I haue done: But yet

*Seb.* He will be talking. *The Tempest*, II. i. 27-8.

*Adr.* Though this Island seeme to be desert.

*Seb.* Ha, ha, ha.

*Ant.* So: you'r paid.

*Adr.* Vnhabitable, and almost inaccessible.

*Seb.* Yet

*Adr.* Yet

*Ant.* He could not misse't.

*Adr.* It must needs be of subtile, tender, and delicate temperance. *Ibid.*, 36-43.

. . . to be a wel-fauoured man, is the gift of Fortune, but to write and reade, comes by Nature.

*Watch 2:* Both which Master Constable

*Dogb.* You haue: I knew it would be your answere:

*Much adoe about Nothing*, III. iii. 14-19.

*To.* Come on, there is fixe pence for you. Let's haue a song.

*An.* There's a testrill of me too: if one knight giue a

*Clo.* Would you haue a loue-song, or a song of good life? *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 34-9.

where, as Dr. Furness explains, 'Feste interrupts Sir Andrew's twaddle'; Feste, who has a shrewd eye for business, pockets both sixpences and promptly sings 'O Mistris mine' to secure them. The later Folios rightly punctuated 'give a —'. But some modern editors, lacking the dramatic sense, have suggested tags to put the grammar straight.

42. *Quotations.*

i. These are given in italics—the commonest form in use, e.g. for songs, letters, and proclamations.

True is it that diuineſt Sidney ſung,  
*O, he is mard, that is for others made.*

Nashe, *Summers laſt will and Teſtament*, 1600,  
 ſig. B 3 (*Works*, ed. McKerrow, III, p. 238).

... there's an old rule, *No pledging your owne health.*

Jonſon, *Euery Man out of his Huſmour* (Folio,  
 1616, p. 89).

ii. The use of brackets for quotation is fully illustrated on pp. 94-5.

iii. The quotation may run on without even a capital letter.

A brace of Dray-men bid God ſpeed him well,  
 And had the tribute of his ſupple knee,  
 With thankes my Countreimen, my louing friends,  
*Richard the Second*, I. iv. 32-4.

*Shy.* What faies that foole of *Hagars* off-ſpring? ha.  
*Ief.* His words were farewell miſtris, nothing elſe.  
*The Merchant of Venice*, II. v. 44-5.

Shall in theſe Conſines, with a Monarkes voyce,  
 Cry hauocke, *Julius Caſar*, III. i. 272-3.

... let me be vildely painted, and in ſuch great  
 Letters as they write, heere is good horſe to hire: let

them signifie vnder my signe, here you may see  
*Benedicke* the married man.

*Much adoe about Nothing*, I. i. 274-8.

Now must the world point at poore *Katherine*,  
And say, loe, there is mad *Petruchio's* wife  
If it would please him come and marry her.

*The Taming of the Shrew*, III. ii. 18-20.

Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,  
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.

*Sonnet viii.*

Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,  
And O poor haples Nightingale thought I,  
How sweet thou sing'st, how neer the deadly snare!

• Milton, *A Mask*, 565-7 (*Poems*, 1645, p. 100).

iv. Proverbs and moral maxims—'sentences',  
as they were called—were sometimes given in  
italics.

*Joy grauen in sence, like snow in water wast;*  
*Without preserue of vertue, nothing last.*

Chapman, *Hero and Leander*, 1598, Third Sestiad,  
sig. F 2.

But a favourite device to call attention to  
them was the use of inverted commas at the  
beginning, but not at the end, of the line.

Therefore this maxime out of loue I teach;  
" *Atchieuement, is command: vngain'd, beleech.*

*Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 316-7.

... vnlesse Experience be a Iewell, that I haue  
purchased at an infinite rate, and that hath taught  
mee to say this,



" *Loue like a shadow flies, when substance Loue pursues,  
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.*

*The Merry Wines of Windsor*, II. ii. 216-21.

c Cor. Yet here *Leartes*? aboard, aboard, for shame,  
The winde fits in the shoulder of your faile,  
And you are staid for, there my blessing with thee  
And these few precepts in thy memory.

" Be thou familiar, but by no meanes vulgare ;

" Those friends thou hast, and their adoptions tried,

" Graple them to thee with a hoope of Steele,

" But do not dull the palme with entertaine,

" Of euery new vnfleg'd courage,

" Beware of entrance into a quarrell ; but being in,

" Beare it that the opposed may beware of thee, .

" Costly thy apparrell, as thy purse can buy.

" But not exprest in fashion,

" For the apparell oft proclaimes the man.

*Hamlet*, I. iii. 55-72 (Quarto, 1603, sig. C 2).

Then *Isabell* liue chaste, and brother die ;

" More then our Brother, is our Chastitie.

*Measure for Measure*, II. iv. 185-6.

*Bel.* Oh noble straine !

O worthineffe of Nature, breed of Greatnesse !

" Cowards father Cowards, & Base things Syre Bace ;

" Nature hath Meale, and Bran ; Contempt, and Grace.

*Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 24-7.

We must impute it to this onely chance,

" *Arte* hath an enemy cal'd *Ignorance*.

Jonson, *Euery Man out of his Humour*

(Folio, 1616, p. 86).

What though a world of wretches starue the while?

"He that will thriue, must thinke no courses vile.

Ibid., I. iii. (p. 98).

*Tham.* Wounds may be mortall, which are wounds indeed:

"But no wounds deadly, till our Honors bleed. *Exeunt.*

Ford, *The Lovers Melancholy*, 1629, sig. I

(ed. Bang, ll. 1803-4).

*Kin.* Not vnder vs, but next vs take thy Seate,  
„*Artes nourished by Kings make Kings more great,*  
Vse thy Authority.

Dekker, *Satiro-Mastix*, 1602, sig. L 2 (ed. Scherer,  
ll. 2436-8).

#### 43. *The use of capital letters.*

A note on this subject may not unfitly be appended to a discussion of other points of difference between modern and earlier printing.

i. Capitals emphasize: hence the implied courtesy in their use with proper names. Where a word derived special significance from its context, it was the rule to use a capital.

But *Brutus* sayes, he was Ambitious:

And *Brutus* is an Honourable man.

*Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 99-100.

*Bass.* Sweet *Portia*,

If you did know to whom I gaue the Ring,

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If you did know for whom I gaue the Ring,  
And would conceiue for what I gaue the Ring,  
And how vnwillingly I left the Ring,  
When nought would be accepted but the Ring,  
You would abate the strength of your displeasure ?

*Por.* If you had knowne the vertue of the Ring,  
Or halfe her worthineffe that gaue the Ring,  
Or your owne honour to containe the Ring,  
You would not then haue parted with the Ring : . . .  
He die for't, but some Woman had the Ring.

*The Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 192-202, 208.

### ii. Sometimes the emphasis is due to contrast.

*Por.* The Crow doth sing as sweetly as the Larke  
When neither is attended : and I thinke  
The Nightingale if she should sing by day  
When euerie Goose is cackling, would be thought  
No better a Musitian then the Wren ? *Ibid.*, 102-6.

In Peace, there's nothing so becomes a man,  
As modest stillnesse, and humilitie :  
But when the blast of Warre blowes in our eares,  
Then imitate the action of the Tyger :

*Henry the Fifth*, III. i. 3-6.

iii. Hence a significant use, such as the employment of a technical term or the heightened meaning conveyed by a metaphor, would require a capital.

*Loren.* Faire Ladies you drop Manna in the way  
Of starued people.

*The Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 294-5

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*La.* Madame, wee'le play at Bowles.

*Qu.* 'Twill make me thinke the World is full of Rubs,  
And that my fortune runnes against the Byas.

*Richard the Second*, III. iv. 3-5.

... our Sea-walled Garden, the whole Land,  
Is full of Weedes, her fairest Flowers choakt vp,  
Her Fruit-trees all vnpruin'd, her Hedges ruin'd,  
Her Knots disorder'd, and her wholesome Hearbes  
Swarming with Caterpillers.

*Gard.* Hold thy peace.

He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd Spring,  
Hath now himselfe met with the Fall of Leafe.  
The Weeds that his broad-spreading Leaues did shelter,  
That seem'd, in eating him, to hold him vp,  
Are pull'd vp, Root and all, by *Bullingbrooke* :

*Ibid.*, 43-52.

*Bull.* Goe some of you, conuey him to the Tower.

*Rich.* Oh good : conuey : Conueyers are you all,  
That rise thus nimble by a true Kings fall.

*Ibid.*, iv. i. 316-8.

*Duke.* Oh Place, and greatnes : millions of false eies  
Are stucke vpon thee : volumes of report

Run with these false, and most contrarious *Quest*

Vpon thy doings : *Measure for Measure*, iv. i. 61-4.

Editors alter '*Quest*' to '*quests*', but Mr. Thistelton has fully vindicated the Folio text. '*Quest*' is a verb like '*Run*', and 'most contrarious' qualifies it as 'false' qualifies '*Run*'; 'most contrarious *Quest*' is equivalent to 'hunt counter'. But the clue which guided Mr. Thistelton to this lucid explanation of the construction was the use

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of the capital. ‘“Quest”,’ he says, ‘is of course the verb—capitalized because it is a technical term of the chase and used metaphorically—which signifies the giving tongue of the dog on the scent of game’ (*Notulae Criticae*, 49). The compositor knew what he was printing.

iv. That the old practice was not purely arbitrary is shown by the use and disuse of capitals at the beginning of a clause or sentence. Where a new sentence merely answers a previous question or closely carries on the idea of the previous clause, the capital is dropped.

Mark'd ye his words? he would not take y<sup>e</sup> Crown,  
Therefore 'tis certaine, he was not Ambitious.

*Julius Cæsar*, III. ii. 118-9.

MACB. Out on thee, dotard! what starre rul'd his  
birth?

That brought him such a starre? blind *Fortune* still  
Bestowes her gifts on such as cannot vse them:

*Every Man out of his Humour*, II. iv. (Folio, p. 114).

And the usage is reversed after a colon or semicolon when a clause gives a new turn to the thought, expresses deeper feeling, or adds in any way a touch of emphasis.

If good CHRESTVS,  
EVTHVS, or PHRONIMVS, had spoke the words,  
They would haue moou'd me, and I should haue  
call'd

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My thoughts, and actions, to a strict accompt  
Vpon the hearing: But when I remember,  
'Tis HEDON, and ANAIDES: alasse, then,  
I thinke but what they are, and am not ftirr'd.

*Cynthias Renells*, III. iii. (Folio, 1616,  
pp. 210-11).

If it were done, when 'tis done then 'twere well,  
It were done quickly: If th'Affaffination  
Could trammell vp the Consequence, . . .

*Macbeth*, I. vii. 1-3.

O here

Will I set vp my euerlasting rest:  
And shake the yoke of inauspicious starres  
From this world-wearied flesh: Eyes looke your last:  
Armes take your last embrace: And lips, O you  
The doores of breath, seale with a righteous kisse  
A datelesse bargain to ingrossing death:

*Romeo and Iuliet*, v. iii. 109-15.

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